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Grassroots organizations and urban regeneration in Qingdao, China

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PhD thesis

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Abstract

The commencement of China's market reform, and the emergence of property-led urban development in Chinese cities, has given rise to residents' resistance against displacement, and the emergence of grassroots protests campaigning for higher compensation. Consequentially, questions of how to mediate contestations and social conflicts in the urbanization process has become a focus of policy reforms in China at both the central and the local levels. This research focuses on urban development in Qingdao, a coastal city in China, and seeks to explore, and understand, local reform initiatives relating to displacement. The focus is the emergence of new forms of governance through the context of local Residents' Committees (RCs), or community based, non-government organizations, increasingly responsible for policing social conflicts and resistant activities related to urban renewal and regeneration projects.

In the current literature, residents' involvement in, and protests against, China's urban renewal and regeneration programmes have been given scant attention. Likewise, while there is an emerging literature about the role of RCs, and their governance roles in the vacuums left by a shrinking socialist welfare state, knowledge on how they are shaping urban governance, and urban renewal and regeneration, is under-developed. This thesis addresses these knowledge gaps, by focusing on one grassroots organization in the city of Qingdao, Nan Shan Residents' Committee's (NSRC), and its involvement in No.19 Fushun Road's regeneration in 2012. Drawing on in-depth interviews with Qingdao's officials, NSRC's staff and Fushun community's residents, this research shows how the NSRC operates to manage and marginalise residents' opposition and resistant to regeneration. In doing so, the research contributes to the understanding of Chinese governmentality in the reform and transition period, and explores how far ideas, based on Western (liberal) societies, including arguments about governing at a distance and through freedom, can be used to understand urban change and transition in contemporary China.

Table of Contents

Abstract	2
Table of Contents.....	3
List of figures.....	6
List of tables	7
Abbreviations.....	8
Acknowledgement.....	9
Introduction.....	10
Chapter 1 The dark side of China's development: from the pro-development state to the disenfranchised mass	20
1.1. Introduction.....	20
1.2. Market reform and the emergence of property-led development in Chinese cities	22
1.3. The pro-development/pro-profit state: The political economy behind China's rapid urbanization and urban development.....	29
1.4. The rights to the city and the dark side of China's development.....	36
1.5. Conclusion	42
Chapter 2 Contesting the urbanization process: state policy, forced demolition, and the role of grassroots protests.....	44
2.1. Introduction.....	44
2.2. Protests under China's political regime: Individualised resistance activities with pragmatic goals	45
2.3. Rapid development as priority: Forced eviction and demolition in China's context.....	55
2.4. Balancing social stability and rapid development: Central state interventions and new government initiatives	63
2.5. Conclusion	68
Chapter 3 Studying Chinese cities: methods, practices and reflections	69
3.1. Introduction.....	69
3.2. Research questions	69
3.3. Qingdao, an "ordinary city": From paradigmatic urbanism to comparative urban study. 70	

3.4. Case study	73
3.5. Data collection and analysis	76
3.6. Access and power relationships in the field.....	84
3.7. Conclusion	88
Chapter 4 From the colonial city to the modern global city: urban planning, social change, and urban transformations in Qingdao	89
4.1. Introduction.....	89
4.2. Planning a modern port city: The political process and the urban form in the métropole and the outré-mer.....	90
4.3. Governing Chinese workers: divided spaces and policing techniques.....	100
4.4. “Urban development serves industrial development”: Socialist urban planning and spatial practice	104
4.5. Building a modern city: Discourses and techniques for conducting large-scale urban demolition and relocation.....	109
4.6. Conclusion	119
Chapter 5 The community trail: Nan Shan Residents’ Committee as a vanguard in urban governance and community regeneration	120
5.1. Introduction.....	120
5.2. The community trail in China	122
5.3. Nan Shan Residents’ Committee: “Prime minister in the alley” and laboratory of new government initiatives	126
5.4. “We are government’s arm in the community”: Centralized control and NSRC’s top-down agenda.....	135
5.5. Personnel management and centralized control in NSRC.....	141
5.6. Conclusion	145
Chapter 6 Community participation at No. 19 Fushun Road: empowerment or government control?.....	147
6.1. Introduction.....	147
6.2. Participation, community and urban governance.....	148
6.3. Redeveloping No. 19 Fushun Road: participation under a prescribed agenda.....	150

6.4. Issues with consultation.....	157
6.5. Participation and consensus shaping: Marginalising oppositional voices.....	162
6.7. Conclusion	170
Chapter 7 Social capital and community activists: governing the nail households.....	172
7.1. Introduction.....	172
7.2. Social capital as a government instrument	173
7.3. Inner city neighbourhood, sense of place and social capital	176
7.4. Governing through social capital: rights and duties of self governance citizens	179
7.5. The dark side of social capital: nail households, persuasion and oppression	182
7.6. Conclusion	189
Chapter 8 Conclusions: Towards an understanding of China's neoliberal urban transition and Chinese governmentality	190
8.1. Introduction.....	190
8.2. Residents' committees and the restructuring of urban governance.....	191
8.3. Understanding China's neoliberal transition	195
8.4. From residents' experiences to an emancipatory urban politics	198
Appendices.....	204
Bibliography	221

List of figures

Figure 1.1. Caoyang New Workers' Village.....	24
Figure 2.1. Chongqing resident occupying the house.....	53
Figure 2.2. The symbol of "Chai"	59
Figure 2.3. Uniforms on the scene of forced demolition.....	60
Figure 3.1. Location of Qingdao.....	72
Figure 3.2. No.19 Fushun Community.....	74
Figure 4.1. Qingdao urban planning, 1900.....	94
Figure 4.2. Airscape of Qingdao in 1912.....	98
Figure 4.3. Qingdao's barrack styled housing.....	107
Figure 4.4. Zhong Shan Road, Qingdao.....	116
Figure 5.1. Location of Nanshan Residents' Committee.....	128
Figure 5.2. Front Gate of Nanshan Residents' Committee.....	129
Figure 5.3. Hierarchical structure of NSRC.....	142
Figure 6.1. No.19 Fushun Road.....	151
Figure 6.2. Classic restaurant by No.19 Fushun Road.....	153
Figure 6.3. Information Boards.....	163
Figure 7.1. The poster outlining Fushun community's nail households.....	187
Figure 7.2. No.19 Fushun Road has been demolished.....	188

List of tables

Table 3.1. Documents being collected and analysed (selectively outlined)	78
Table 3.2. Meeting observed.....	80
Table 3.3. Interviews completed.....	82
Table 5.1. Evaluation criteria for Qingdao's RCs (selected criteria)	138
Table 5.2. Evaluation criteria for NSRC's performance in community redevelopment project.....	140

Abbreviations

Urban Housing Demolition Management Ordinance (UHDMO)

CCTV (China Central Television)

SOE (State owned enterprise)

East Zone (EZ)

Residents Committee (RC)

Residents Committees (RCs)

Nan Shan Road Residents' Committee (NSRC)

Non Government Organizations (NGOs)

Fuxin Road Street Office (FRSO)

Yi Zhong Real Estate (YZRE)

Real-estate Evaluation Companies (REECs)

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Introduction

The commencement of China's market reform and open door policy in 1978 brought many new dimensions to Chinese urbanism, including property-led urban development, rapid urbanization, and the emergence of an entrepreneurial local state shaping growth coalitions with developers in chasing land-based interests at the expense of demolishing long-existing urban neighbourhoods, and marginalizing people's use value demands. These urban phenomena and processes have been given extensive attention, argued by many as evidence of China's neoliberal transition (Logan, 2002; Ma, 2002; Wu, 2003, 2010; Harvey, 2005). However, another key dimension in China's neoliberal urbanism, which has been given comparatively less study, is social conflicts and contestations that have accompanied market reform and urbanization. In the past thirty years, residents' protests and resistance against demolition and displacement have increased in number and are a constitutive part of the Chinese urbanization process. Forced demolition activities by China's local state, in which residents are forcefully evicted from housing and their properties are expropriated without consent, have been accelerating land clearances but also galvanizing residents' protests and exacerbating social conflicts. China's previous Prime Minister Wen pointed out, in 2011, at the Eleventh National People's Congress, that social conflicts aroused by land expropriation and housing demolition are primary challenges for government and the focus of future reforms.

Social conflicts during China's neoliberal transition, and, more specifically, residents' protests and resistance against forced demolition and displacement in urban renewal and regeneration, therefore, signify a central dimension in Chinese urbanism, a primary concern of Chinese politicians, and a key agenda of policy reforms. But how are they addressed by government policy, political and institutional reforms? This research sets out to answer this question. In 2010, China's central state sponsored reform initiatives to regulate land clearance processes at a local level. These included the publication of a series of legal documents, such as the *Ordinance of Expropriation and Compensation of Housing on State Owned Land*, which forbade the forced eviction of residents and the forced expropriation of urban housing, encouraging localities to seek more consensual, and less confrontational, ways of conducting community development projects.

In addition, the central state intensified political controls over local officials, punishing local politicians issuing forced demolition orders, and who were accused of harming residents' interests in the land clearance process. The hope is to mitigate social conflicts in China's urbanization process, and restore social stability and political order in Chinese society.

This research also sets out to understand China's neoliberal transition. Following Larner (2000), this research defines neoliberalism not only as a policy framework, but also as ideology and governmentality, "the principle and method for the rationalization of governmental practices" (Burchell, 1993: 269). Neoliberal governmentality, which is also termed by others as (neo)liberal government strategies or (neo)liberal arts of government (Burchell, 1993; Rose, 1999), is characterized by, in the Foucauldian view, "governing at a distance". The neoliberal government, as Burchell (1993) points out, not only upholds the traditional liberal spirit of minimal government interventions, but is also characterised by the enabling state, which governs in the name of an "artefact freedom", the freedom that must be cultivated by the state (Rose, 1999; Dean, 2002). The rationality of an enabling state, according to Rose (1999), underpins the flagship political programmes in advanced liberal societies, such as those enshrining the spirit of empowering communities and shaping active citizenship.

For many researchers, Chinese society, since market reform, is also witnessing a similar neoliberal transition, where the omnipotent state, that assumes to know all and intervenes in every domain of social life, is fading away, and where the cultivation of civil society and the ability of self-government signifies a central theme of institutional reforms; or, as many researchers point out, the phrase "big society, small government" captures China's reforms and changes in the post-reform period (Ru, 1998; Jia, 2002; Luo and Ding, 2004; Sigley, 2006; Jiang, 2008). There is an emerging literature exploring China's neoliberal government strategies and their embodiment in many social domains and policy areas in China. Sigley (2006) points out, on a broader level, that China's neoliberal transition is embodied in the dissolving of the central planning regime and the implementation of a competition mechanism into the economic domain. There is also a corpus of work pointing out China's transformation from government to governance, embodied in the emergence of NGOs and business organizations which function as the sites of government beyond

the state and are rescaling the boundaries and functions of the state (see for example, Howell, 2004; Lieberthal, 2004; Saich, 2004). In addition, through studying Chinese university graduates, who are no longer assigned with jobs by the state, but find their own jobs from the market in the post reform period, Hoffman (2006) shows that Chinese society has transformed into one that values individuals' freedom and responsibility of choice. But less is addressed about how urban renewal and regeneration speaks to China's emerging neoliberal government rationality, as well as whether, and in what sense, this neoliberal governmentality is characterized by "governing through freedom", (re)structuring the process of urban regeneration in China. This research aims to address this knowledge gap.

The first aim of this thesis is to explore the interrelationships between the Chinese central state's reform initiatives and urban renewal and regeneration at a local level, with the focus on Qingdao, a coastal city in China. In 2012, in response to the central state's orders forbidding the use of forced demolition, Qingdao's municipal government sought a new approach for conducting land clearances and community development. This research explores such reforms that, in Qingdao, are characterized by the emergence of new forms of governance, that is, the use of Residents' Committees (RCs), or community based, non-governmental organizations, in delivering community renewal and regeneration. Drawing upon a case study, the redevelopment of No.19 Fushun Road in Qingdao in 2012, and through semi-structured interviews, this research finds out that in No.19's development, Nan Shan Residents' Committee (NSRC) plays a key role in the community's regeneration, not only in terms of drawing residents' support and consent for government planning, compensation policies and relocation schemes, but also in pacifying local residents' oppositional voices and resistance activities. As Qingdao's municipal government claims, the RCs' involvement in community regeneration carves out a new approach for conducting urban development, signifying alternatives to the forced demolition approach and the use of coercive power in promoting land clearance.

A second aim of this research is to understand the RCs' roles in urban governance more generally. There is a significant literature addressing this theme, that considers organisations such as the RCs as part of newly decentralised government functions, such as welfare services provision and

community security, operating in the vacuum left by the shrinking socialist welfare state (Mok, 1988; Read, 2000, 2003; Derleth and Koldyk, 2004; Yan and Gao, 2005; Bray, 2006, 2008; Gui, 2007; Geoghegan and Powell, 2008; Shieh and Friedmann, 2009; Mowbray, 2011). Based upon and developing these arguments this research contributes to understanding not only the RCs' agendas and functions, and in what sense they are playing key roles in urban governance, but also addresses the RCs' relationships with local government authorities and local residents. Such relationships have received scant attention, but, as this research argues, are important in understanding Chinese residents' lives in urban communities, as well as the transformations and changes in modes of China's urban governance. It is through performance evaluation, competitive funding and personnel controls, a series of techniques that signify "governing at a distance", that Qingdao's local government authorities prescribe NSRC's agendas and mobilize the committee staff's enthusiasm at work. This research also observes NSRC's relationships with local residents, in terms of how it addresses local residents' voices, desires and interests in its daily work. It argues that the committee showcases dislocated accountability from local residents and sees its priority as meeting government evaluation criteria. In urban renewal and regeneration, NSRC has been active in following government orders, that is, to vacate the community as soon as possible, accelerating the land clearance process, and policing residents' oppositional voices, regardless of marginalising residents' voices in local development agenda-setting and making them experience discrimination and oppression.

A third aim of this thesis is to explore residents' experience in, and their subjective voices about, urban renewal and regeneration. It shows that in Qingdao, residents' experiences of redevelopment projects is characterised by, not only empowerment and participation that are brought about by local policy reforms, nor simply marginalization and exclusion in which RCs play a key role, but both. In unpacking residents' experiences in urban renewal, this research gives attention to a special group of residents, namely the "nail" households, or the residents refusing to vacate the community identified for development and demanding higher compensation and central relocation sites. As a marginalised and powerless group and whose very existence signifies a sensitive topic in China, these people's voices and experiences are less discussed in current literature.

I argue that in Qingdao, local policy reforms in terms of urban renewal and regeneration embody new calculations and strategies that speak to neoliberal governmentality. This research finds that empowerment of communities and mobilization of residents' self-government activities signify key reform initiatives in Qingdao. Or, quoting Rose (1999), in Qingdao, a key strategy of liberal government, is, "a double movement of autonomization and responsabilization" of community (1999: 174), characterising local policy reforms in terms of conducting urban regeneration. As the case of No.19's redevelopment shows, local residents have participated in the decision-making process, and, Qingdao's government authorities claim this signifies, apparently, the community's involvement in, and democratic control over, the future of the area. Underpinning this initiative is a sentiment that empowerment and democratization signify political progress and area source of the government's political legitimacy. The rationality held by an omnipotent state, which exerts control and intervenes in the name of promoting social welfare and justice, and asserts the efficiency of policies, in itself would signify legitimacy, therefore, fades away in Qingdao. It is not through forced eviction and demolition, an approach signifying the use of too much violence and coercive power, that the community's nail households are dealt with. Instead, local residents are mobilised, by drawing on their sense of obligation towards the community, into persuading nail households to drop their blocking actions and vacate the properties, that the problem of nail households in No.19 is solved. But simultaneously, Qingdao's municipal government has regrouped its functions, towards better coordination, by intensifying its controls over NSRC. It is through the committee that local residents are mobilised into a series of self-government activities, and, oppositional voices are suppressed and controversies are stifled. I argue that in Qingdao, the local state restructures its functions, redrawing its boundaries, assuming a less interventionist role, but, is still powerful in different ways.

To summarise and recount, this research aims to examine policy reforms in terms of conducting community renewal and regeneration in Chinese cities, exploring how local policy reforms are addressed through shaping RCs' vanguard roles in urban regeneration, and, on a boarder level, to understand RCs' roles in urban governance and reflect on China's neoliberal transition. This research explores the following questions:

- | What are RCs' functions and agendas in community regeneration and urban governance?
- | Which government techniques are used in governing RCs, whether, and in what sense, have these techniques (re)shaped and prescribed RCs' agendas and accountability?
- | What are residents' experiences in community regeneration, and how does this relate to RCs' activities?
- | How do we understand China's neoliberal transition, in relation to RCs' roles in urban governance?

This thesis comprises eight chapters. Chapter 1 examines urban phenomena, processes and problems related to China's market reforms, and addresses these as key dimensions of China's neoliberal urbanism. These include the dissolving of central planning regimes, the privatisation of urban land and housing, and the emergence of property-led urban development, large-scale demolition and rapid urbanization; the pro-development/pro-interests state at the central and local levels, which pursue their own political and economic interests in, and through accelerating, the rapid urbanization process; as well as the economic dispossession, political disenfranchisement, and geographical displacement, of masses of urban residents in urban renewal and regeneration. I accentuate that low compensation, and displacement of residents from urban central locations, signify key points in investigating China's urbanization and neoliberal transition. They tell us about how private developers seek profits through accumulation by dispossession in Chinese cities, and through which Chinese government authorities realise ambitious plans of gentrifying inner city places, and they form a primary source of urban grassroots mobilization and protest around Chinese cities.

Chapter 2 provides a review of social conflict, urban contestation and governance issues in Chinese society, in the post-reform period. In China's urbanization and development, economic interests and political rights are contested between residents and local government authorities, embodied in residents' protests against displacement and fights for higher compensation, and in local government authorities' forced eviction and demolition activities, to suppress resistance and accelerate the land clearance process. This kind of urban contestation has been the focus of the central state's reforms. A series of reform initiatives sponsored by China's central state in 2010,

which focus on forbidding the use of forced demolition activities, signify, as this chapter argues, efforts to renew and generate better governance processes at the local level. At the end of this chapter, I present the questions I will explore in the remainder of this thesis: how, and in what ways, will the central state's reform initiatives induce changes in the localities, and in urban renewal and regeneration processes, in terms of state functions, boundaries, power forms, and governmentalities or the art of government.

Chapter 3 addresses methods and methodology issues. It briefly introduces the city of Qingdao and No.19 Fushun Road, the case study of this research, and illustrates the reasons why I chose to focus on these places. This chapter also reviews and reflects on how to use data collection methods, including semi-structured interviews, participation observation, and documents, as well as thematic analysis, in addressing the research aims and solving the research questions. I also reflect on different forms of power relationships I have confronted, and have to address, in the field, including how to access elites such as government officials; how to build rapport with, and protect the confidences of, the powerless people such as normal residents; as well as how to conduct research on Chinese cities while urban paradigms in urban research and policy have been built upon experiences and knowledge of cities in advanced industrial societies.

Chapter 4 examines Qingdao's development and planning in the last century, outlining the city's development trajectory through time: from a colonial city, to an industrial city with a socialist regime, to a place experiencing market reform and neoliberal transition after the 1990s. The aims of this chapter include to provide a deeper context of Qingdao's planning and development, social transformations, renewal of landscape, changes in urbanism, and through these, respond to Robinson's (2004, 2008, 2011) calls to give an account of ordinary cities' particularities in development and urbanism and dissolve an urban paradigm in urban research. In addition, this chapter also seeks to unpack, following Castells (1983), whether, and in what senses, urban contestations signify an inherent part of Qingdao's urbanization and development; as well as to discover, and understand, different forms that urban contestations have taken in different historical periods in Qingdao, and how these contestations are embedded in the social and political particularities of the time. Since the 1990s, Qingdao's development has resembled a

neoliberal transition: there is an entrepreneurialised local state which prioritises investment, land-based accumulation and property-led development. Residents' protests and resistance against demolition, displacement and low compensation have been the primary urban contestations in Qingdao, signifying people's fight for economic and political rights in the urbanization process. How to mediate such urban contestations is a primary concern for the local state in Qingdao.

The remaining chapters turn to examine policy reforms in terms of urban renewal and regeneration in Qingdao, and how these relate to shaping the vanguard role of RCs in delivering policies and policing oppositional voices. Chapter 5 introduces NSRC in Qingdao, including its agenda, activities, personnel arrangements and funding sources. It unpacks the relationships between NSRC and Qingdao's local state, by addressing issues, including how the local state decentralization process restructures NSRC's functions and responsibilities, which techniques are applied in governing NSRC and how efficient they are in prescribing the committee's priorities, agenda, and accountability. This chapter contributes on a broader level to an understanding of RCs' functions and roles in urban governance. This chapter accentuates the point that NSRC follows a top-down agenda and dislocates its accountability from local residents, because Qingdao's local state controls its funding sources and personnel arrangements. In urban renewal and regeneration, NSRC's priorities and agendas are prescribed by the government authorities, which are, to police resistance and accelerate the land clearance process.

In Chapter 6 and Chapter 7, I turn to focus on NSRC's roles in, and residents' experiences of, No.19 Fushun Road (re)development in 2012, which is one residential compound in the committee's neighbourhood. Chapter 6 addresses issues relating to residents' participation and empowerment of the community in urban renewal and regeneration. It finds that, in No.19, participation is conducted in circumstances that policy agendas and parameters are already settled, by the government authorities., Instead of real empowerment of the community, or when "community and neighbourhood groups take their own decisions and control resources" (Carley et al, 2000, quoted from Ball, 2004: 124), residents' participation signifies a rubber-stamp of government decisions, and an instrument for providing government with political legitimacy. It is through NSRC

that such an instrumentalised participation process is facilitated. The committee plays a key role in marginalising residents' oppositional voices, subduing local debates and creating consensus among residents which show people's consent for relocation and their willingness to accept the government's compensation offers. Participation could become, as Labonte (1999) warns, an approach of control if it is "being organized towards someone else's ideas" (1999: 432).

Chapter 7 examines the governance of nail households in No.19, the people who refuse to vacate their properties and claim higher compensation and better relocation sites. This chapter builds upon discussions on social capital, which is defined, following Putnam (1996), as certain dimensions in inter-personal relationships, including friendship, trust, reciprocity, a sense of obligation, which could be exploited for government purposes. This conceptualization of social capital also underpins reforms in Qingdao, concerning how to deal with nail households. Instead of using forced eviction and demolition activities, Qingdao's government authorities mobilise local residents and NSRC staff, who are friends, or old colleagues, and have built trust and reciprocal relationships with, the nail households, to persuade the latter to drop their resistance actions. Following Wakefield and Poland (2005), I argue that using social capital in the governance process informs a "neo-liberalist approach to social relations" (2005: 2820), at the heart of which is the state's "intervention in community life" (2005: 2829), for the purpose of cultivating community responsibilities and their abilities to conduct self-government. I also examine how, and in what sense, nail households experience oppression in facing the persuasive tactics of neighbours and NSRC staff.

Chapter 8 concludes with the research findings, recounting how the research questions are addressed in the thesis, and summarising how this research contributes to an understanding of China's neoliberal transition. China's emerging neoliberal urbanism lies in, but not simply, certain urban phenomena and processes such as property-led development, the entrepreneurial transition of the local state, and the contestations over economic and political rights in the urbanization process. It is also embodied in the restructuring of state functions, the emergence of a less interventional state which no longer wishes to administrate in every domain of social life, but is rolling out a more enabling role, as well as a more inherently embedded process, a changing

rationality which has started to value freedom of society as an indicator of good governance.

Chapter 1 The dark side of China's development: from the pro-development state to the disenfranchised mass

1.1. Introduction

During China's market reform, which was initiated by the central state in 1978, the country's economic, social and political regimes were significantly restructured. Socialist public ownership was dissolved along with privatization reform, including the privatization of land and housing, which gave rise to the real-estate market becoming the new economic engine of the country. Meanwhile, central-local relationships were rescaled along with decentralization and the fading away of the centralized planned economy, which led to the emergence of an autonomous local state that became increasingly more pro-development, entrepreneurial, willing to absorb risks, and eager to join the competition for capital. It is against this background that China's property-led development projects have emerged, which are pervasive around Chinese cities and are conducted at a large scale. On the one hand, Chinese cities have witnessed rapid urbanization and the modernization of urban landscapes; on the other hand, property-led redevelopment projects also bring a new urbanism to the country. This new urbanism is characterised by new urban phenomena and problems, including demolition and displacement, gentrification and spatial differentiation. This chapter examines the emergence of China's property-led urban redevelopment, a relatively new, post 1978, process, illustrating its emergence, political-economic dynamics, as well as the social, spatial, and political consequences. Responding to He and Wu, this chapter argues that property-led urban development "has emerged in the forefront of (China's) neoliberalization" (2009: 282).

This chapter highlights the point that China's urbanization and urban development in the post-reform period is part of a process of accumulation by dispossession, through which the state and developers are pursuing their own political and economic interests, and contributing to the creation of acute social inequality, hierarchical citizenship, and causing displacement, dispossession and disenfranchisement of residents. By drawing on the discourse of the right to the city, this chapter argues that China's urban development signifies a process that privileges the

minority but marginalises the majority (Nonini, 2008); or, as in Harvey's sense, in China as well as in advanced capitalist countries, "the actually existing right to the city, as it is now constituted, is far too narrowly confined, in most case in the hands of a small political and economic elite who are in a position to shape the city more and more after their own particular needs and hearts' desire" (2012: 24). China's urban inhabitants, who are increasingly more discontented about the dispossession and disenfranchisement they confront, initiate protests and resistance activities. I will examine these protests and property activism, the new urban crisis in post-reform China, in the next chapter. As mentioned, the aim of this thesis is to examine how urban protests and resistance activities caused by urban renewal and regeneration are governed at China's local level. This chapter provides the broader context on the emergence of China's property-led urban redevelopment projects, and indicates the political roots and institutional sources of urban protests.

The remainder of this chapter is divided into four parts. Section 1.2 outlines China's market reform and the emergence of property-led urban development in Chinese cities. I examine several market reform initiatives, including the privatisation of urban housing and land which gave rise to the real-estate market, the downsizing and squeezing of State Owned Enterprises' (SOEs) responsibilities of housing provision and renewal which are being replaced by market mechanisms, and the national opening up of policies that allow private and foreign capital flux into China's real-estate market. Around the early 1990s, China witnessed the prosperity of the real-estate market, which became the economic engine of the country. Chinese cities were enwrapped in a frenzy of conducting property-led urban development, which induced rapid GDP growth, fast urban development and modernization, as well as large-scale demolition and displacement. Section 1.3 focuses on the political-economic dynamics behind China's large-scale urbanization, urban renewal and regeneration. It argues that rapid urbanization and urban development are reinvented by China's central state as processes, that both central and local government acquire their own political interests and economic benefits; and therefore, China's incessant urban expansion, urban renewal and regeneration are propelled together by both central and local government. Section 1.4 offers a critical view on the social and political consequences of China's property-led urban development. It shows that Chinese citizens, especially disadvantaged groups,

are made to experience economic dispossession, displacement, spatial differentiation, as well as inequality and marginalization, caused by an emerging hierarchical citizenship. By drawing on the discourse of the right to the city, this section argues that China's urbanisation in the post-reform period informs the dispossession of inhabitants' rights and causes acute disenfranchisement.

1.2. Market reform and the emergence of property-led development in Chinese cities

In 1949, the socialist regime was established in China, and along with it, the centralized planned economy, public ownership of land, housing, as well as other assets and resources. Before 1978, when market reform was initiated and reshuffled these economic and political institutions, China's urbanization was strictly supervised and controlled by a powerful central state, implementing a production-centred urban planning and development approach. On the one hand, China's cities experienced rapid industrial development and expansion, and the cities functioned as "the (physical) site of production" (Wu, 2003: 1333). On the other hand, an anti-urbanism urban policy was enacted, which constrained urban consumption functions for the purpose of conceding funding and capital to production (Wu, 2003; Lin, 1998; Yin, 1987; Ma, 1976). Recounting this point, Huang points out a "production first, consumption second" principle that prescribed Chinese cities' planning, construction and public funding schemes before the late 1970s (2003: 593).

The work units, also known as Danwei, referred to specific kinds of workplaces in socialist China: state-owned enterprises, government departments and institutions (Wu, 1996; Bray, 2005). By using their retained profits or surplus, with the supervision and permission of the government authorities, each work unit provided exclusive, club-like welfare services to its own workers, and usually free of charge. These services included a wide range, such as medicine care, nursery centres, training schools, and canteens. The list and the quality of services will be different in each work unit's case depending on their economic capabilities. It was through the work units that the majority of China's urban population were capable of accessing basic services and survived in anti-consumption cities where services were usually nowhere to be purchased. But this was at the

expense of the exclusion of a small number of citizens who were unemployed and did not belong to any work units – such as disabled people, people with criminal histories, and those who had “political issues”, such as those who used to be capitalists and prostitutes.

Providing free housing and ameliorating workers’ living conditions through housing renewal were also among work units’ important responsibilities (Hui, 2009). When the communist state was established in 1949, the country’s inner cities were filled with old housing and shanty towns that lacked modern living facilities such as sewer systems, electricity, running water, and heating devices. During the socialist transformation movement that was initiated by the central state during the 1950s, which involved the expropriation of private properties to public ownership, inner city housing became a state-owned resource. This housing was allocated to the work units, and then assigned to the workers as shelter, providing overcrowded, insanitary, and inconvenient living conditions for China’s urban residents. Denouncing the miserable housing conditions of England’s working class in the 1840s, Engels presents a classic picture, by describing the living environment in London’s St. Giles, a place near Oxford Street and Regent Street: “It is a disorderly collection of tall, three- or four-storied houses, with narrow, crooked, filthy streets The houses are occupied from cellar to garret, filthy within and without, and their appearance is such that no human being could possibly wish to live in them Heaps of garbage and ashes lie in all directions, and the foul liquids emptied before the doors gather in stinking pools” (1892: 27). Chinese inner-cities before market reform seemed to some extent analogous to the UK’s situation in the 1840s.

Work units began to be at the vanguard of housing renewal projects during the 1960s. Before this, there was a short period of central state sponsored slum clearance, through which Chinese cities’ housing conditions were improved. These central-state funded renewal projects were imbued with symbolic and political meanings – to demonstrate that the new communist state was dedicated to and was also capable of providing a better life for the people (Xie and Costa, 1993; Chen, 2006). One of these politically high-profile state-led housing renewal projects was the redevelopment of one of Shanghai’s shanty towns into the famous Caoyang New Workers’ Village in 1952. This was the very first modern working class community in socialist China (see **Figure 1.1**).

However, since the mid 1960s, when numerous renewal projects were completed, the central state felt these demonstrations were sufficient, and public funding was gradually withdrawn from supporting housing renewal. Instead, the work units were required to fund the renewal projects. (Re)developing new housing and upgrading workers' living conditions became one of the work units' responsibilities, and was added to the list of welfare services they provided to the workers. Capturing this change, Chen (2006) points out that China transformed from a state-led, movement style of urban renewal to a self-dependent, work unit-led urban renewal mode in the 1960s.

Figure 1.1. Caoyang New Workers' Village



Dates: 1952, September

Source: <https://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E6%9B%B9%E6%9D%A8%E6%96%B0%E6%9D%91>

The work unit-led urban renewal projects were conducted at slow speed and small scale. This was due to the lack of funding and resources, the strict state control of land allocation, and the socialist political culture – the “mass line” which encouraged citizens' participation in the decision making process, had seriously fettered the speed and the scale of the renewal projects. Thompson

(1975), a British planning professional who conducted field work in Chinese cities in 1974, documents how a work unit-led renewal project would proceed and why it was slowed down under the socialist regime. To start with, the work unit would have to hold several consultation meetings to find out people's views and needs, including whether they welcomed a renewal project and how they wanted the new accommodation to be, including the size of the flats and the number storeys of construction; then there would be the tough, time and energy consuming canvassing of government authorities to gain access to public-owned land. Following this, the work units needed to find temporary accommodation for the workers, and it was normally the work units' responsibilities to pay for the rent. Then, the old housing was demolished and the construction work would start, but this process was very likely to be interrupted and delayed due to a lack of funding, labour, and construction materials such as wood and cement, and sometimes the work units' workers themselves would have to contribute their labour to the construction project.

The work unit-led renewal projects were totally welfare oriented – they were for the purpose of ameliorating workers' housing conditions and the newly developed flats would normally be allocated to the people free of charge. The principles of allocation included age, the size of the family, or one's positions in the work unit. For example, a family with children would normally be allocated with a larger flat than a family comprised of only one couple; and the elderly would normally be allocated with lower level flats than young workers, considering their physical difficulty in climbing the stairs in housing with no elevators. While the housing allocation principles could be interpreted as reinforcing the unequal and hierarchical relationships among workers, it also embodies the needs-based allocation principle which is central to China's communist ideology (Lim and Lee, 1990; Walder, 1992; Wu, 1996; Zhou and Logan, 1996; Logan, et al, 1999).

Work unit-led urban renewal was the product of its own time. It informs how urban land and resources were allocated and accessed under socialist public ownership; how urban production and reproduction processes were assigned importance; and how urban changes were brought about under the anti-urbanism and under-urbanization policies which fettered urban

development and modernization. The market reform process that was initiated by China's central state in 1978 brought about privatization, market competitiveness, the minimised state, and individual choices to China's society. Chinese society experienced a neoliberal transition, in the sense that the relationship between the state, market and society was significantly restructured, with market norms becoming the new "social integration and governing mechanism" (Wu, 2010: 628; see also, Nee, 1989; Hoffman, 2006; Liew, 2005; Ma, 2005; Kipnis, 2007; Walker and Buck, 2007). On the state side, the rolling out and rolling back processes occurred simultaneously, with the state changing from a production organizer to a "market manager" (Gordon, 1991; Lerner 2000; Peck, 2001; Wu, 2003).

In this context, the work units, especially the SOEs, were restructured, downsized, and squeezed of their social responsibilities to be more efficient and competitive (Fan, 1994; Broadman, 1995; Hu, 1996; Hu, 2000). Out there, the "market" was cultivated to fill the gap left by the shrinking work unit system: urban consumption functions were resurgent to provide people with the services that were released from the work units; the market mechanism gradually replaced the administrative approach to resource allocation, allowing private enterprises to participate in service provision. Not only in welfare provision, but in broader economic, social and political life, the work units' roles were significantly marginalised, replaced by markets that "have been created for a vast range of commodities, resources, and services" (Pieke, 2012: 150). Housing renewal and regeneration were no longer the responsibility of the work units; and, in fact, the work units were gradually excluded from this domain by private capital that was flowing in. Since the late 1980s, work unit-led, welfare oriented urban renewal was replaced by property-led, market-oriented urban redevelopment.

Among all the marketization policies and reforms that directly and indirectly led to the popularity of property-led development in China, land and housing reforms were essential. Land reform was initiated by China's central state in the 1980s, through giving public owned land a market dimension: the use-right and ownership of land were identified and separated, and the former was commodified and allowed to be transformed on the market (Lin and Ho, 2005; Hsing, 2010). With Shenzhen as the first laboratory for land auction, other Chinese cities gradually gave up the

administrative way of land allocation and adopted land auction and tender in the 1990s. Private developers and private capital were more capable of accessing land resources through an increasingly open and transparent land market, and moved into the domain of urban land and housing redevelopment (Zhu, 2005).

China's housing reform involved a sequence of initiatives that lasted from the late 1980s to the late 1990s. State-owned housing was privatised through subsidised selling to individuals, and the socialist welfare housing system was dissolved which meant that housing was no longer a welfare service provided by the state free of charge. Instead, housing was gradually commodified, becoming a market good. Based upon this new conceptualization of housing, new rules of housing redevelopment took over. In principle, housing redevelopment was seen as market behaviour, involving individuals selling their properties to developers, receiving money compensation according to the property's market price, and then purchasing new houses, either through the market or the relocation housing provided by the developers with some discount. The in-kind and on site relocation policies, which were enacted in the pre-reform era, adopted in work unit-led housing development, were gradually replaced by the monetary compensation approach (Wu, 2004). In Dowall's (1994) sense, China's urban development policies are increasingly market-driven, and to some extent resemble its neighbouring capitalist cities such as Hong Kong, Seoul and Singapore, where property development policies provide valuable experience in engendering a transparent and rapid accumulation process (see also, Schiffer, 1991; Zhu, 1997; Haila, 2000).

Finally, the housing and land reforms cultivated mature and prosperous property markets around Chinese cities. On the supply side, speculative investments increased and were encouraged somewhat by deregulation of the local state. Private developers exploited the gradient of land prices in Chinese cities; this action pushed up land and property prices; and this further stimulated investment and a new round of price rises; and created a vicious circle. On the demand side, the state was engaged in cultivating needs and manufacturing affordability, by developing a bank credit system, and establishing a residents' housing provident funding system, compulsorily extracting part of an urban resident's salary to be used as to fund housing purchase (Rosen and

Ross, 2000; Hui, 2009). So far, we can already see that in China, the emergence of the property-led, market oriented urban development approach is not only based upon the ideological redefinition of urban land and housing, where land is no longer seen as a collectively owned product material but a market commodity with exchange values, and housing is a market good instead of part of socialist state welfare (Hui, 2009). It is also based upon the ideological redefinition of individuals themselves, as rational and responsible consumers, to play along with the market norm, to invest wisely in the property market and therefore cater for their own housing needs (Rose, 1992, 1996; Davis, 2000; Ngai, 2003; Zhu, 2005; Hoffman, 2006; Hui, 2009; Kipnis, 2007).

Property-led urban development proceeded at a rapid speed and generated significant changes in Chinese cities. This is evidenced by the data provided by some writers. A property boom emerged in many Chinese localities. In Shanghai's case, there was the widely discussed "Shanghai bubble" (Ramo, 1998; Haila, 1999; Harvey, 2005), characterised by the super-fast speed of (over)construction of skyscrapers, smart hotels and offices – by the end of 1995, "13.5 million square feet of office space" was built, which was "five times the 2.7 million square feet in 1994" (Harvey, 2005: 133). Massive foreign investment went into Chinese real-estate development. As Wu (2001) indicates, in Shanghai's case, it was 1.05 billion dollars in 1996 and increased to 1.33 billion dollars in 1997. Meanwhile, large-scale urban demolitions and relocation were conducted in Chinese localities, creating vacant land for property development. From 1990 to 1998, 4.2 million m² of housing were demolished in Beijing, and 33 million m² residential buildings were dismantled in Shanghai, causing 745,000 households to be relocated (He and Wu, 2007; Klimova, 2010). Large-scaled demolitions happened not only in Chinese metropolises but also in other smaller cities. For example, from 2012 to 2014, approximately 20,000 households were relocated in Jinan's shanty town remodelling projects; in Chengdu, 410 m² buildings were demolished and 114,000 households were relocated between 2002 to the end of 2004; in Mu Danjiang, a small-sized city in the northern part of China, similarly ambitious as other Chinese cities, 1 billion RMB were invested to remodel 44 shanty towns and led to 36,000 households being removed from 2008 to 2010; and the list continues. In China, the emergence of large-scale demolition was combined with the creation of a new "urban problem": associated with the imperative to remodel old and dilapidated inner city slums, the ruthless eviction and relocation involved in Chinese

state-led demolition were legitimised. In this sense, Zhang and Fang (2004) argue that China's urban demolition resembled the USA's "state bulldozer" of the 1950s and therefore that history was indeed repeating itself to some extent.

Therefore, we can see an indication of the state playing an important part in China's property-led development. While Chinese cities had become "venues for frenzied real-estate development and property speculation" (Harvey, 2005: 133), behind this, it was not only the in-flow of private capital which injected a dynamic into the property market. More importantly, there was a pro-development state, at the central and the local levels, preoccupied by a "casino mentality" in its policy making (Harvey, 2005), which plotted the property boom and rapid urban (re)development and pursued its own economic profits, political interests, and policy goals through these processes.

1.3. The pro-development/pro-profit state: The political economy behind China's rapid urbanization and urban development

China's market reform and "open-door-policy" were initiatives in response to the crisis of state-led accumulation. Due to an anti-urbanism policy and lagging urban consumption functions, China's state-led industrialization and accumulation processes finally reached their limits in the 1970s. There was a "lack of effective demand, especially outside the state sector" (Wu, 2003: 1333), and "state-led accumulation thus was unable to tap into a pool of idle production factors (labour in particular), which could not be combined and recycled through an economic system that possessed no alternative accumulation space" (Wu, 2010: 622). Market reform was sponsored to open up new accumulation spaces and to generate new forms of economic growth. These aims were met by the new economic opportunities brought about by China's marketization and globalization, such as China's expanding export economy, its endless efforts in attracting foreign investment and its incorporation into the world financial system, and its prioritised development of high-tech sectors and the tourism industry (Harvey, 2005, 2007). Above all, the real estate industry became one of the most powerful engines for China's economic boom (Wu, 2002).

Since the late 1980s, China's real-estate industry entered a period of rapid development and reached its golden years in the 1990s. The real-estate business stimulated the development of many other industries, such as iron, cement, machinery, and furniture, to name a few. More importantly, China's real-estate industry produced high volume, and increasingly more expensive housing for Chinese people, and through this, created China's domestic demand and stimulated the Chinese economy (Lin, 2000; Wu, 2001). Becoming the economic engine for the UK around the 1960s, for Hong Kong and Singapore in the 1980s (Schiffer, 1991; Zhu, 1997), the real estate industry has emerged as China's "new growth pole of the economy" since the 1990s (Wu, 2001: 277). In addition, massive housing construction sites around Chinese cities provided millions of jobs for rural to urban migrants and for urban residents who were laid-off during the downsizing of SOE's during the 1990s. China's prosperous real-estate market thus absorbed the idle labour created during China's economic reform, which could otherwise have caused acute social instability. Given all this, the real-estate industry was seen by the Chinese central government as a panacea for a series of social and economic problems emerging during China's transition period. The real-estate industry formed an increasingly larger percentage of China's GDP, amounting to 16% in 2013, an arguably dangerously high percentage that signified an economic bubble. However, with the importance of the real-estate business, rapid urbanization, large scale urban demolition and housing redevelopment projects in China's cities never stopped accelerating in speed and expanding in numbers. China's urbanization in the post-reform period, therefore, forms "part of neoliberal projects to provide a spatial fix to the crisis in the accumulation of capital" (Shin, 2011: 3).

In the pre-reform period, China's central state drew its political legitimacy by sticking closely to a series of socialist ideologies, values and norms, such as working class leadership, egalitarianism, and the concept of the superiority of socialism over capitalism. This political strategy lost its efficacy during China's market reform and transition, as all those values that were once drawn upon by the central state were fragmented, and it faced new phenomena and social problems, such as regional uneven development, the widening gap between rich and poor, and the increasingly acute social resentment of privatised and unaffordable services such as schools and

healthcare. Generating rapid development and economic success became the new strategy to replace the failed old one (Shin, 2004; Nonini, 2008; Wu, 2010). Since the 1980s, a new political rhetoric has been created and disseminated around the country, by China's central state, to forge economic development and modernization as new sources of political legitimacy. These included the well-known "Xiao Kang society" discourse, made during Deng's leadership in the 1980s, setting up the building of a wealthy society as the new political pursuit of the nation; and the more recent "Chinese dream" concept that was proposed by current president Xi, which offered the Chinese people an image of a bright future with a wealthy society and the great renaissance of the Chinese nation. In practice, China's economic development and modernization have indeed successfully boosted the central state's legitimacy. Evidencing this point, Liu and Raine (2015) indicate that in the past three decades, China's economic success has strengthened citizens' trust and faith in the central government, which further added to its political legitimacy. This process is accompanied by a "bizarre citizen psychology" which attributes the economic achievements and success to the central state, while the local state is at fault for the problems (such as increasingly serious corruption and inequality). According to Pieke, in the political domain, China has experienced a "neo-socialist transition", in the sense that "the communist utopia has been replaced by a technocratic objective of a strong, peaceful, and modern China" (2012: 150). Recounting this point, Bresline comments that China has been "moving from a politically to a more economically mobilised society" (1996: 689). Successfully focusing on economic development as its new source of legitimacy, increasingly "China's socialist governance and a capitalist economy are now locked in a symbiotic relationship" (Pieke, 2012: 149), in the sense that their survival in China is dependent on each other's prosperity.

In this context, rapid urbanization is reinvented by China's central state as an important indicator of China's economic success, and therefore, an important strategy for restoring its political legitimacy. Since the 1980s, China has experienced rapid urbanization and large-scale inner city renewal and regeneration, through which the modern urban landscape has been shaped around the country, arguably based upon a certain "urban paradigm". Similar images can be found around Chinese cities, such as CBDs composed of skyscrapers and office buildings with glass curtain walls, assemblages of smart shopping malls and classic hotels, and cultural sites like museums, theatres

and galleries. Indeed, the modern urban built environment, as directly lived and experienced by individuals, and compared with some abstract economic indicators such as China's rapid GDP growth of 8% annually, provides concrete and persuasive evidence to the Chinese people about the nation's economic success and rapid development. Meanwhile, China's central state has also engaged in reproducing the new conceptualization of the urban environment representing modernity, wealth, and a happy life. Many efforts have been made, such as propagandizing the beautified urban lifestyle through news reports and TV programmes, and inventing rhetoric such as the "City makes life happier", which was the slogan of Shanghai 2010 World Expo (Shin, 2014). Therefore, according to Shin (2014), China's urbanization in the post-reform period should be seen as an ideological and political project to regenerate people's conceptualization and imagination about lifestyle and modernity, and how these relate to the urban environment and political legitimacy.

In summary, it is through facilitating rapid urbanization and large-scale urban renewal projects that China's central state is solving the accumulation crisis and restoring its political legitimacy in the post-reform period. This explains the pro-development attitude of China's central state and why it has so firmly proposed rapid urban development since market reform. In the post-reform period, Chinese cities have taken on new meaning. They are no longer the "physical site(s) for containing industrial production", but are "becoming the physical and functional means of accumulation" (Wu, 2003: 1333). Chinese cities are also being reinvented as symbolic spaces for the contestation of wealth, modernization, happiness, prosperity, as well as more political issues such as equality, people's political rights and government's legitimacy. While China's central state has successfully manoeuvred economic success and rapid urbanization as sources of legitimacy, problems such as social polarization and disenfranchisement have become increasingly more acute. Therefore, China's economic development and urbanization projects somehow enable the country to evade its real legitimacy problem (Shin, 2004). The social tensions caused by these "real problems" have led to the explosion of the 1989 protests movement. Although the movement is now pacified, the problems behind it remain strong and generate persistent resistance activities. I will discuss these social tensions and protests more detail in the next chapter.

In the 1980s, China also witnessed the dissolving of the centralized planned economy along with decentralization and empowerment processes. Chinese localities became increasingly more autonomous over local development and urban planning, and gained increasingly more discretion in allocating land and financial support, attracting investment, and building infrastructure. The central state cut its intervention role in local development, and shrank back to the domain of “foreign policy, national defence, and birth planning” (Zhang, 2006: 108; see also, Naughton, 1987, 1996; Walder, 1994; Wang, 1994, 1995). Given this, many writers comment that China is turning towards a de facto federalism, in the sense that central–local relations in China are “functioning more and more like federalism” (Zheng, 2006: 101); and that it is “market preserving federalism” (Blanchard and Shleifer, 2000: 2), in the sense that greater empowerment and decentralization in China is providing market incentives for engendering rapid local development (see also, Qian and Weingast, 1997: 83; see also, Oi, 1992; Montinola, et al, 1995; Lin, 2000; Zhang, 2006). Therefore, as a result of China’s market reform, Chinese localities have replaced the central state and have become the new decision-making centres and the engines of China’s economic development.

While decentralization has occurred for economic decisions, China has remained politically centralized, and therefore the central state can still exert effective influence over local development, but, in Foucault’s (1978) terms, “at a distance”. One embodiment of China’s political centralization is Communist Party rule and the central state’s absolute control over the selection and promotion of local officials. A key standard adopted by China’s central state in promoting local officials is their performance in promoting local economic development. According to Li and Zhou (2005), in post-reform China, the top provincial leaders presiding over better economic performance during their tenure have better chances of being promoted as central state leaders. This injects strong pro-development sentiments into China’s provincial officials, who will, in turn, enact similar promotion criteria to encourage good economic performance from lower-level officials (see also, Chen, et al, 2005; Maskin et al, 2000; Blanchard and Shleifer, 2000; Whiting, 2001). An incentivised personal control mechanism, also termed “yardstick competition” (Zhang, 2006) or a “promotion tournament” (Zhou, 2007), has been created within China’s government structures, activating Chinese officials to generate rapid economic growth. Large-scale urban

construction, including highways, housing, power plants and theatres, which stimulate local real-estate development, contribute to local rapid GDP growth, and bring about significant urban changes and visible achievements for the leaders to see, have become Chinese officials' trump card to win in their career contests (Guo, 2009). China's official promotion mechanism therefore informs a political dynamic behind China's rapid urbanization.

In addition, China's central state can also influence localities' development agendas and policies through adjusting certain national policy frameworks, such as the fiscal regime. Since the early 1990s, Chinese cities have faced an acute mismatch between income and expenditure. This was due to two simultaneous processes: on the one hand, the decentralization of health care, affordable housing, and many other responsibilities to the localities; and on the other, the 1994 fiscal reform through which the central state took a larger share of local revenue (Oi, 1992; Walder, 1994; Tsai, 2004; Zhang, 2006). To balance localities' financial deficit, and to mediate their resistance to the new revenue regime, China's central state chose to leave a particular local income, from the sale of land, as localities' own revenue. Chinese localities' land-based finance was therefore shaped, and it was the product of central-local negotiation and compromise in the face of fiscal reform. With land-based finance in place, land auction and land leasing became the primary measures for Chinese localities to increase their revenue. Urbanization and inner city redevelopment projects held a new dimension of meaning for Chinese localities, as the processes to expropriate land from the farmers and the urban residents' hands and to acquire the "source" of local revenue. Therefore, China's central state's fiscal reform was responsible for Chinese localities' turning towards "land developers" and the pursuit of economic incentives and exchange values of urban land (Lichtenberg and Ding, 2009). Land-based finance, a unique fiscal regime shaped during China's market reform period, became a primary political-economic mechanism for the spread of ambitious urbanization programmes and large-scale demolition projects around Chinese cities.

As the above argument shows, it is through facilitating rapid urbanization projects that China's localities acquire their political and economic interests; and, "urban modernity, more than industrial modernity, now captures the political imagination of (China's) local state leaders" (Hsing,

2010: 6). Increasingly, urbanization (re)defines China's local state policy agendas and their relationship with the central state, market and society. It is in this sense that Hsing comments that "it is the dialectical 'urbanization of the local state'— more so than the linear concept of 'state-led urbanization'— that characterizes the relationships between the local state and the urban process in China today" (2010: 7). With the local state's pro-development and pro-urbanization sentiment becoming dominant, new urban phenomena and processes have emerged. In order to accelerate rapid urban development, China's local state shapes growth-coalitions with developers (Molotch, 1976, 1999; Stone, 1989; Zhu, 1999; Zhang, 2002; He, 2007; Xu and Yeh, 2009); and there is also a widely documented entrepreneurial transition within China's local government, passionately attracting investment, willingness to absorb risks, and ambitiously taking part in the global competition for capital (Harvey, 1989; Leitner, 1990; Healey, 1991; Harding, 1992; Peck, 2001, 2004; Brenner and Theodore, 2002; Jessop, 2002; Wu, 2003, 2008). In the end, as a result of Chinese cities' opening up to global investment, Chinese localities have become closely connected with global financial systems and the global capital accumulation process. China, therefore, has developed into "one epicentre for an urbanization process that has now become genuinely global" (Harvey, 2012: 12), and global-local discourses are increasingly more pertinent in explaining China's urbanization and local development (Swyngedouw, 1997; Wu, 1997, 2010; Ma, 2004).

Also widely documented as another urban phenomenon caused by China's rapid urbanization is the marginalisation of residents' benefits. In the past three decades, China's urban development has involved "speculative urbanization projects", which, in Shin's sense (2014), have focused on the extraction of exchange values and accelerated capital accumulation process. Recounting this point, He and Wu point out that China has experienced an "increasingly neoliberalized urban redevelopment" in the sense that urban redevelopment in China "has become an important component of spatialised capital accumulation ... (which) has a preference for seeking short-term returns from subsidised real-estate investment" (2009: 283). On the other hand, Chinese residents' experiences of the urbanization process include economic exploitation, displacement, spatial differentiation, and disenfranchisement. In fact, as I will show in the next section, China's urbanization and rapid urban modernization processes were premised upon dispossessing Chinese residents' economic benefits and political rights. I call these the dark side of China's development.

1.4. The rights to the city and the dark side of China's development

According to Harvey, "the corporatization, commodification, and privatization of hitherto public assets have been signal features of the neoliberal projects", because they extend and deepen the process of accumulation by dispossession, by opening up "new fields for capital accumulation in domains formerly regarded off-limits to the calculus of profitability" (2007: 35). Illustrating this point further, Harvey exemplifies with Thatcher's privatization reform of social housing in the UK, an initiative that would "create a rent and housing price structure throughout the (London) metropolitan area that precludes lower-income and now even middle-class people from having access to housing anywhere near the urban centre" (Harvey, 2012: 20). Somewhat analogous to the UK, China's privatization reform of publically owned housing in the 1980s (see section 1.2) also started the process of displacement and dispossession around the country. Chinese citizens, who became property owners during the privatization process, before enjoying their new identities and rights for too long, were evicted from central urban locations during urban renewal.

Yet central urban location informs the "privileged place(s)" (Lefebvre, 1991; in Kofman and Lebas, 1996: 34), with "an artificially and colossally increasing value" (Engels, 1845; in Harvey, 2012: 17), and bears witness to intense competition among different social classes. This competition started more than one hundred years ago in the UK, and, as Engels (1845) described, was embodied in extruding "low valued" working-class residential housing from the city centre which was then replaced by more profitable workshops and warehouses. In advanced capitalist countries, especially in US metropolises, after a short period of "inner city decline" through the 1950s to the 1970s, the urban centres began to regain their attractiveness in the 1980s due to culture-led regeneration projects (see for example, Smith, 1982, 2002; Mills and Price, 1984; Massey and Denton, 1988; Mieszkowski and Mills, 1993; Champion, 2001; Cameron, 2003; He, 2007). In China's context, where the urbanization process started in the 1980s and the history of rapid urban development has been short, inner city areas are the places where high quality urban services and facilities, such as transportation, residential housing, shopping malls, and schools, are concentrated. Meanwhile, uneven development between inner city and suburban areas is significant. It is usually the case that Chinese suburban places lack proper planning and

development. For Chinese people, central urban locations are the most desirable places for living, investment, and doing business. China's inner city cores bear the dreams of different social groups: they provide luxurious and privileged (consumption) spaces for the rich, meet middle class aspirations for better housing and a modern urban lifestyle, and provide a response to disadvantaged groups' desires for access to better opportunities (for jobs, education, etc.). Since market reform, China's central urban locations, where housing prices are rising fast and customers are concentrated, have also become increasingly more attractive for business and for speculative investment (Li and Siu, 2001; Purcell, 2002; Ma, 2004).

However, central urban locations are reserved for the rich and elites, in China as well as in other places, during the urban planning process. In advanced capitalist countries, as Imbroscio observes, urban planning and public policies have been prescribed by a "mobile paradigm", which is "marked by a strong emphasis on facilitating population movement as a means of addressing urban social problems" (2011: 1). In essence, this planning paradigm holds that "few people in a given metropolitan area actually live in the place where they are supposed to"; and, based upon this perspective, urban planning informs a process to re-arrange and re-shuffle urban populations throughout urban space, in a way that keeps the middle-class in the urban centres and disperses the less-well-to-do residents to urban margins, the so-called "opportunity areas" for the poor (Imbroscio, 2011: 6). In China's context, while central urban locations were planned with factory workshops and working class communities before market reform, since the early 1990s, Chinese planning officials have sought alternative schemes for the inner city - as the location of the CBD, classic shopping malls, tourist destinations, culture centres, and exclusive residential communities. The original inner city residents – mostly workers in state owned factories, so many of whom were laid off during the 1990s SOE reforms – are no longer considered a desirable population for central locations where land has become so expensive and competitive under China's current urban planning schemes. Their homes are demolished in the name of clearing away urban slums, and they are dispersed to outer urban areas and experience forced residential mobility, in the name of mitigating over-population (see for example, Rex, 1971; Logan et al, 1999; Wang, 2000; Ma, 2004; Liu and Wu, 2006). In Chinese cities as well as in other capitalist cities, such as Manhattan, New York, the inner city areas are being gentrified and reshaped as "one vast gated community for the

rich" (Harvey 2012: 23). Throughout the world, therefore, the gentrification of urban cores forms part of a central planning strategy (see for example, Glass, 1964; Smith, 1982, 2002; Hamnett, 1984, 1991; Berry, 1985; Bourne, 1993; Butler, 1997; Cameron, 2003).

In addition, low compensation is a key economic mechanism in facilitating the forced residential mobility that is experienced by the poor; or, in other words, it is through offering residents low compensation rates for their properties that the planning goal of gentrifying inner city places is realised. On the one hand, relentless renewal and regeneration create expansive inner city places; on the other, the low compensation that is offered to residents deprives them of the affordability to remain in the city centre. Therefore, Wu suggests that low compensation is at the core of a new sorting mechanism, through which Chinese residents are relocated "according to their varied socioeconomic status", and this informs a broader socio-spatial restructuring process that is currently underway around Chinese cities (Wu, 2003: 1337; see also, Smith, 1982; Wu, 2004; He, 2007).

The reason why developers are capable of conducting demolition through offering low compensation rates, is because they have more control over the urban development agenda. Evidence comes from Atlanta, USA, where developers have shaped growth coalitions with the local state and penetrated the decision making process (Stone, 1989); or from Moscow, Russia, where developers have built close personal connections with urban administrative elites and therefore gained the power to decide compensation (Badyina and Golubchikov, 2005). In China's context, while the local state used to set minimum compensation standards in the early 1990s, it gradually pulled back in subsequent years amid claims to let the market do its job. The result of this is that developers gained increasingly more power in setting compensation, and depressed compensation levels considerably. During China's urban renewal and regeneration, it is often the case that the targeted properties are stigmatised, by the developers, as "dilapidated", "blighted", and "obsolete". It is through this stigmatising strategy that developers devalue properties' exchange and use value and justify offering low compensation to residents (Beauregard, 1993; Page, 1999; Fogleson, 2001; Weber, 2002). In addition, in China's context, the compensation offered to residents is always based on the "current price" of properties, that is, the price before

redevelopment. Therefore Chinese residents are excluded from enjoying the added value brought about by urban development. Because of the low levels of compensation, the less-well-to-do residents, after their houses are demolished, find themselves unable to afford the expensive properties in the inner urban areas and have to move to the outer urban districts where property prices are comparably low. Meanwhile, developers try their best to lure the less wealthy residents away to suburban areas, by constructing relocation communities at these places and offering attractive discounts. In addition, affordable housing constructed by China's local government is normally located in suburban places instead of inner city areas, providing accommodation for the poor who cannot buy properties.

In the past three decades, so many large-scale development projects have occurred around Chinese cities and have repeated the processes of displacement and gentrification. At the end of section 1.2, I outlined some figures which showed that in many Chinese cities, hundreds of thousands of households were displaced during urban development projects in just a few years. Many of these displaced residents have been relocated to outer urban areas, realising planners' ambitions of gentrifying the inner city and accelerating the suburbanization process. In Liao Ning Province, the remodelling of industrial brown field sites, has induced 706,000 households to be displaced from 2005 to 2009, with one quarter of them being relocated to newly developed suburban satellite towns. In Qingdao, a large-scale suburban residential community, Fu Shan Hou, with capacity for accommodating 400,000 households, has been constructed since 1998, providing for more than 100,000 households displaced during the inner city redevelopment projects.

Displacement forms one of the most significant problems suffered by urban residents, in China's context as well as in other places. Displacement and residential instability are blamed for shattering residents' social networks and attachment to place, uprooting them from the place-specific socio-spatial context where "a world of predictability and confidence" has been created, and where practices and daily life "tend to get routinized, and for very good reasons ... [as] they not only facilitate realization of individual ends" (Cox and Mair, 1988: 312). In addition, residential instability is also criticised as "deleterious to political life", in terms of corroding a sense of belonging, willingness to participate, and levels of civic involvement (Elkin, 1987; Dagger, 1997;

Williamson, 2010; Imbroscio, 2012).

In China's context, gentrification and displacement induce similar, but also additional far more significant social and political consequences. This relates to how one's citizenship is (re)defined. While remaining in central urban locations is becoming increasingly more difficult for the poor and even for other people, due to rising property prices and the dispersal plans made by planning officials, living in urban cores is also becoming increasingly more crucial to acquiring proper citizenship. In China, the household registration system, which was established during the pre-reform period and still functions today, registers people belonging to certain places, rural or urban, this city or that city, and determines people's rights to access urban services, welfare, job and education opportunities. While the household registration system remains an important dimension in defining Chinese citizenship and political identity, its dominant position, to some extent, is undermined and eroded, if not replaced, by property rights. Since the year 2000, many Chinese cities have witnessed unstable real-estate markets with a roller-coaster of property prices and falling demand. To stimulate real-estate markets, many Chinese cities, including Qingdao, Dalian and Shenyang, have enacted new policies: those who are not registered as local citizens will acquire formal citizenship and enjoy local welfare services, if they purchase newly developed, large-sized flats (normally larger than 100 m²) in the city. It seems that China's household registration system, the citizenship regime, and the urban welfare system, which used to be strictly controlled, impermeable, and closed to outsiders, now are rendered porous by property ownership. In addition, within Chinese cities, property ownership also decides citizens' access to good quality education. Around Chinese cities, from kindergartens to senior high schools, seriously uneven resource distribution exists that separates these schools into so called "privileged schools" and "normal schools". The former have sufficient funding support, provide high quality education and offer their students better opportunities to access other privileged schools (for example, the students in privileged elementary school normally have a better chance of being accepted by another privileged junior high school than those in normal elementary schools). To decide who can access which school follows a so-called "adjacent principle", that is, the property owners of the houses near the schools have access to them. However, it is always the case that the houses near the privileged schools are extremely expensive, sometimes up to ten times more than the

average property prices in the city, and far beyond the affordability of normal people. It is not an exaggeration to say that property ownership redefines Chinese hierarchical citizenship which is privileging the rich and the powerful (Solinger, 1999; Keane, 2001; Smart and Smart, 2001; Goldman, 2005).

The above argument is evidence that China's urban development forms part of a process of accumulation by dispossession, which is "founded on the exploitation of the many by the few" (Harvey, 1976: 314). In many senses, China's urbanization informs a politics and policy approach that is against the claims of the right to the city discourse. According to Harvey, "the right to the city is not merely a right of access to what already exists, but a right to change it after our heart's desire" (2003: 939). The right to the city, therefore, informs a right to alternative urbanism, "the right to remake ourselves by creating a qualitatively different kind of urban sociality" (Harvey, 2003: 939), and it is "not merely a right of access to what the property speculators and state planners define, but an active right to make the city different, ... and to re-make ourselves thereby in a different image" (2003: 941). To bring about an alternative urbanism, as Harvey claims, it is crucial to exert "greater democratic control over the production and use of the surplus" (2012: 23); or, according to Purcell, we must confront "capital's ability to valorise urban space, establishing a clear priority for the use value of urban residents over the exchange value interests of capitalist firms" (2002: 103). According to Lefebvre, the right to the city "cannot be conceived of as a simple visiting right... (but) can only be formulated as a transformed and renewed right to urban life" (1996: 158). Lefebvre claims that the right to participation and appropriation over the production of urban spaces must be given to all urban inhabitants, those who live in the city and "contribute to the body of urban lived experience and lived space" (Purcell, 2002: 102). In a radical Lefebvrian notion, to claim the right to the city, citizenship and political membership must be redefined to transcend the political order that defines inclusion/exclusion as an urban process (Dikec, 2001, 2005; McCann, 2002; Purcell, 2002; Brenner et al, 2012). Under the lens of the right to the city discourse, Chinese urbanization is seriously problematic: it is a process that prioritises the pursuit of exchange value and rapid capital accumulation, creating displacement, dispossession and economic exploitation, (re)producing marginalization and discrimination, and perpetuating disenfranchisement, a process that, as Mayer comments, "entails enormous losses of rights – civil,

social, political, as well as economic rights (2009: 367).

1.5. Conclusion

This chapter examines the new urban phenomena, urban processes and urban problems related to China's political and market reforms. These include the emergence of property-led urban development, the pro-development/pro-profits behaviour of central and local government, as well as the large-scale demolition, displacement, dispossession, and disenfranchisement of urban inhabitants. These, as this chapter argues, form the crucial dimensions of Chinese neoliberal urbanism, and are constitutive parts of the process of the neoliberalization of social, political and economic relations in Chinese society.

According to Harvey, "urbanization, we may conclude, has played a crucial role in the absorption of capital surpluses and has done so at ever-increasing geographical scales, but at the price of burgeoning processes of creative destruction that entail the dispossession of the urban masses of any right to the city whatsoever" (2008: 37). In this chapter, by examining China's urbanization in the past three decades, we come to the same conclusion as Harvey. I highlight the point that China's urbanization informs a process of accumulation by dispossession, a process that is "funded on the exploitation of the many by the few" (Harvey, 1976: 314). I have shown how urban renewal and regeneration cause dispossession of residents' economic benefits and their rights to stay in central urban locations; the sense in which Chinese urban development informs discriminatory urban policies that remake Chinese cities as "one vast gated community" for the rich to enjoy (Harvey, 2012: 23), but deprive disadvantaged groups of rights to live in the city; and how, and in what ways, in post-reform Chinese society, property ownership is (re)invented as a privilege for the rich and powerful and an important dimension in redefining Chinese citizenship, political identity, and the right to the city. With the pro-development sentiment becoming dominant at China's central and local state levels, it is quite unlikely that Qian and Wong's expectation that "the fruits of market reforms will hopefully be shared by all social groups through the regulative role of the government", will be realised in China (2000: 125).

Low compensation levels and displacement, as I have tried to demonstrate in this chapter, are two correlated processes under China's urbanization, with the former as a primary economic mechanism that induces the latter. While western countries have already passed the phase when large-scale urban demolition and displacement engendered an urban crisis and became the target of urban protests and movements (Mayer, 2009), this is the phase that Chinese cities are now entering. In China's context, since the early 1990s, low compensation and displacement started to arise as the most direct issues suffered by Chinese residents, and became new points of focus for urban contestation and political mobilization in the country. Around these issues, Chinese residents are sponsoring protests fighting for their economic and political rights, the central and local state is (re)inventing new governance initiatives, and trying to redress the balance between rapid development and social (in)stability. I will examine these social contestations and governance issues in the next chapter.

Chapter 2 Contesting the urbanization process: state policy, forced demolition, and the role of grassroots protests

2.1. Introduction

In chapter 1, I examined market reform and the emergence of property-led urban development projects in China. I highlighted China's urbanization process as characterised by low compensation for dispossession, the displacement of residents, and the adoption of a class dimension in the sense that the urbanization process is reinforcing the rights and power of the rich while sacrificing the rights of the poor and disadvantaged groups. But it is exactly based upon such a biased urbanization process that China's central and local states are developing their own political and economic interests. Since the early 1990s, residents' protests and resistance activities started to emerge around Chinese cities, focusing primarily on claims against displacement and low compensation. Responding to these urban grassroots struggles, China's central and local states sponsored a series of new government initiatives and policy reforms, to govern, pacify, and suppress, residents' resistance activities and to maintain China's urban development and urbanization at a rapid pace. In this chapter, I will examine these contestations around China's urbanization process.

As this chapter shows, Chinese urban residents' protests against demolition and low compensation are usually suppressed by the local state, through forced expropriation, eviction, and demolition practices. This intensifies social resentment, galvanising a new round of resistance activities which usually take more extreme forms, such as self-immolation. The proliferation of urban grassroots protests and the increasingly more confrontational urban development process has finally alerted China's central state to social instability and the imperative for reform. A series of policy and institutional reform initiatives were published by the central state in 2010 and 2011, for the purposes of regulating development and urbanization processes at the local level, with special focus on restricting the use of forced eviction and demolition approaches in the land clearance process. This chapter examines China's urban grassroots mobilizations and resistance, exploring their political opportunities under China's political regime as well as their power in

bringing about social and political changes.

The remainder of this chapter is divided into four parts. Section 2.2 examines the emergence of residents' protests and resistance activities in Chinese cities against low compensation and displacement. It also analyses why these protests take an individualised form and adopt a blocking strategy, and how these relate to China's specific political regime. While Chinese residents' protests, with a specific form, discourse and strategy, have limited political significance, as they inform no particular urban social movement which challenges urban meanings and structures; I argue that they inform a creative way of protesting under the Chinese political regime and state repression institutions, and, more specifically, they inform how Chinese residents skilfully capture, exploit, and engage with "the structure of domination (and pierce the hegemony) at its weakest point" (O'Brien, 1996: 55). Section 2.3 focuses on the forced expropriation, eviction and demolition issues in the Chinese context. It examines the reason why the forced eviction and demolition approach is widespread around Chinese cities, and in what sense they are efficient tools used by a pro-development state to accelerate land clearance and the urban development process. However, the over-use of forced demolition activities have induced a new urban crisis in the Chinese context, embodied in the emergence of more violent resistance activities that endanger political legitimacy and social stability. To address this, the central state initiated new policy and institutional reforms in 2010 and 2011. I will examine these reforms in section 2.4. Section 2.5 concludes the arguments of this chapter.

2.2. Protests under China's political regime: Individualised resistance activities with pragmatic goals

Examining the "shifting mottos of urban social movements" in advanced capitalist countries, Mayer (2009: 362) points out that in the 1960s and the 1970s, among anti-war movements and contestations on urban collective consumption, there were protests and resistance activities against urban renewal projects and displacement which formed another primary force in urban grassroots mobilisation. The latest kinds of movement are also termed as urban struggles against

“the inhospitality of our cities” (Mitscherlich, 2008: 55, in Mayer, 2009: 363), or resistance against “the barrenness which Fordist zoning of urban space and suburbanization had brought about” (Mayer, 2009: 363). At the time, in London, Berlin, New York, and many other capitalist cities, urban political groups and grassroots organizations, such as tenants’ committees, and homeowner groups, were galvanized against government highway construction projects, inner-city remodelling plans, and the displacement that was induced (see for example, Castells and Sheridan, 1977; Castells, 1983; Mayer, 2009; Holm and Kuhn, 2011; Harvey, 2012). While fading in western countries in subsequent decades, in terms of state-led, large-scale urban demolition, displacement and the resistance activities against them, they are relatively new, and predominant, urban phenomena and processes in developing countries, dating from the early 1990s. In Rio, Delhi, Bombay, Istanbul, Seoul, and many other places that are labelled as “Third World cities”, organised and collective forms of resistance have been observed that are challenging the urban renewal and displacement that is conducted in the name of development and modernization (see for example, Ramanathan, 2005; Bhan, 2009; Shin, 2008, 2009; Loveringa and Türkmen, 2011; Uysal, 2012; Karaman, 2014).

In China’s context, since the early 1990s, large-scale urban renewal and regeneration have created massive displacement and started to form an “accumulation by dispossession” process (see chapter 1). Residents’ protests and resistance activities have sprung up. Yet it is not urban renewal projects and demolition per se, but the low compensation levels, forced displacement, and economic exploitation, which are relentlessly produced throughout the urban renewal and regeneration process (see chapter 1), that generate acute resentment from Chinese urban residents and become the targets of grassroots protests (see for example, Zhang, 2004; Zhang, 2006; Phan, 2005; Ren, 2008; Lee, 2008; Hsing, 2009; Weinstein and Ren, 2009; Yip and Jiang, 2011). A typical demand by Chinese protesters is for higher compensation or better relocation housing in more central locations. The requirements of higher compensation and better resettlement housing, within a central location, are usually seen by Chinese protesters as interchangeable, given that they are so in both symbolic and material terms. In China’s context, with a prosperous real estate market in place, and with expensive new house prices in central urban locations, accessing higher compensation means that residents could purchase high-value

properties around urban centres, after the demolition of their old housing. This would not only guarantee residents' rights to stay in, and enjoy the lifestyle and privileged citizenship attached to, the urban cores (see chapter 1); but also, this guarantees them promising economic returns in the future, by "cashing in on the rising value of their property ... (which) became a convenient cash cow, a personal ATM machine" (Harvey, 2012: 48). Therefore, behind Chinese protesters' claims for higher compensation and (centrally located) better relocation housing, there lies the requirement for both economic and political rights.

In Chinese cities, those who protest against displacement and low compensation are homeowners, the individuals who have ownership over real-estate properties. More specifically, homeowners here refer to two kinds of people: those who became private owners through purchasing public owned housing during the 1980s' housing reform (see chapter 1); and those public renters, the quasi-homeowner of the work unit, local state, and other types of public owned housing, who only pay a nominal fee but are guaranteed stable and permanent use rights. The private renters, referring to the people who are renting properties owned by private homeowners and public renters, however, seldom protest during urban renewal and regeneration. There are several reasons for this, such as that private renters are not being dispossessed of privately-owned properties, which is so crucial in motivating Chinese quasi-/homeowners to act. Also, Chinese private renters, who have experienced frequent moves and live unstable lives in the cities, bear less resentment to demolition induced displacement, than the quasi-/homeowners who desire a stable lifestyle. However, the reason why Chinese private renters seldom protest is not only because they lack the motivation, it is also because they have been deprived of such rights. In China's current urban policy relating to urban renewal and regeneration, it is clearly stated that only the individuals with legal ownership of properties will be compensated for their expropriation. This reflects how China's urban policy, by valuing and respecting private ownership, is deeply rooted in neoliberal economic and political principles, which are becoming increasingly more dominant, and established, in Chinese society since market reform. Chinese private renters are deprived of the right to receive compensation, and, they are, therefore, not given a proper role in the fight for higher compensation and other rights in the urbanization process (such as the right of residential stability) (Rancière, 1999; Rancière, et al, 2001).

Commenting on Chinese homeowners' protests against low compensation and displacement, Perry sees this as informing Chinese emergent "rights consciousness", and reflecting a meaningful "bottom-up claim to citizenship and auguring a fundamental breakthrough in state-society relations" (2008: 37). More specifically, many writers reduce this "rights consciousness" to the rights over private property, which is behind the mobilization of Chinese homeowners. Responding to Harvey's argument on "intense possessive individualism", a neoliberal ethic under which the "the defence of property values becomes of such paramount political interest" (2008: 32), Shin (2013) comments that it also underpins the protests by China's homeowners. Explaining further, Shin argues that in Chinese cities, homeowners have acquired a new, and important, political identity, and their "political interests are centred around preserving (and increasing) property values" (Shin, 2013: 20; see also, Keane, 2001; Perry, 2008). Concurring with Shin's viewpoint on China's emerging property rights consciousness and its political mobilization functions, many writers term Chinese homeowners' protests as property rights activism or protest (Lee, 2008; Hsing, 2009; Shin, 2013), or describe it in a more general way as "Chinese homeowners' defence of their homes" (Cai, 2007: 175).

While in the past in western countries and currently in developing countries, protests and resistance activities against urban renewal and displacement normally take an organized, collective form, as mentioned earlier, this is not the case in China. Instead, Chinese homeowners' protests are more often conducted as individualised activities, that is, they are conducted by single individuals or one single family, as isolated resistance activities instead of in alliance with other protesters. The reason for this has its roots in China's political regime and political culture. In the past three decades, China's central and local states have been ruthless towards suppressing citizens' collective political actions; and, through many events, such as the suppression of the 1989 Tiananmen cross-class alliance demonstration, and the poll plan protest in Hong Kong in 2014, have given citizens explicit warning that collective actions are intolerable in the country, although much more political freedom has been given to Chinese citizens now.

Harvey also discusses the implications of the Chinese state's harsh suppression of collective political action. This resulted in China's absence from the global anti-Iraq war rallies in 2003 which

occurred in so many cities including “Madrid, London, Barcelona, Berlin, and Athens, ... in New York and Melbourne, and ... in nearly 200 cities in Asia, Africa, and Latin America” (Harvey, 2012: 116). Absence from this indicates China’s missing presence from a significant moment of “the first expressions of global public opinion” (2012: 116). Also, as many news reports and research have shown, in the Chinese context, during the past three decades, in fighting for compensation and relocation, those homeowners’ protests and activism which have taken collective form have been confronted with harsh suppression. Chinese homeowners who organise street demonstrations denouncing delayed compensation payments usually end up with the leaders being arrested. Residents, angry about the local state’s corruption and collusion with developers, when travelling to Beijing to hand in their collective petition letters to the central state, are usually blocked by local officials and the police, and will sometimes be sent to detention centres; while lawyer Zheng, when representing a group of evicted residents suing Shanghai municipal officials concerning corruption, was arrested and charged for “circulating state secrets” in 2003 (see for example, Hand, 2006; Human Rights Watch, 2004; Zhang, 2004; Zhang, 2006; Cai, 2007; Hsing, 2009; Kurtenbach, 2009; Weinstein and Ren, 2009; Shih, 2010; Yip and Jiang, 2011). China’s political regime and state repression have gradually ground down and destroyed Chinese citizens’ confidence and courage in taking collective resistance actions. Because of this, China’s resistance activities, and Chinese homeowners’ protests against displacement and low compensations, are seldom conducted in collective form but more usually as individualised actions. Recounting this point, Zhang comments that in terms of Chinese homeowners’ protests, the “shadow of the Falun Gong repression and the 1989 Tiananmen crackdown lingered” (2004: 273).

Indeed, as Scott implies, the forms and parameters of resistance activities are set not only by “the institutions of the repression”, but also by the sociology of the protest groups (1985: 299). Let us remember that what are being demolished during China’s urban renewal projects are usually the poor neighbourhoods, the homes of the less-well-to-do people. In Chinese cities, the poor residents are the primary victims of urban demolition, suffering from dispossession caused by low compensation and displacement. Therefore, except for a few cases when wealthy neighbourhoods are demolished and the rich residents protest, it is the poor and disadvantaged groups who are the primary forces against China’s urban renewal and displacement. While the state’s repressive

institutions channel Chinese homeowners' protests towards an individualised form, the social and economic disadvantaged status of these protesters prescribes the strategies being adopted.

Therefore certain protest strategies, which require well developed economic and social capital of the protesters, such as lawsuits and media exposure, are less popular, and only occasionally, adopted by Chinese homeowners, most of whom are poor and disadvantaged. In the past three decades, there have been some cases when Chinese homeowners have tried to seek legal justice and sue developers and the local state, for example, for low compensation, poor quality housing, contract fraud and corruption. However, in China as well as in other countries, the lawsuit is a game for the rich, given all the time and money required. In addition, specific to China's context, where the courts and juridical system are not independent from, but undergo control and intervention from, the local state, it is less likely that residents will have a chance to win a lawsuit against the local state and developers, who shape growth coalitions for exploiting land-based interests. Recounting this point, Shin comments that Chinese homeowners' "law suit attempts are often marred by bureaucratic processes that act as barriers to plaintiffs, and the existing judicial processes tend to work in greater favour of the government and developers" (2013: 6; see also, O'Brien and Li, 2004; Johnson, 2006; Weinstein and Ren, 2009). Some Chinese homeowners also seek media exposure. The hope is that the public media, such as newspapers, will report their family's story about how miserable their life has been/ will be, because of the low compensation, and through this, to win public support and sympathy, mounting pressure on local government and developers to force them into concessions by raising compensation levels. However, Chinese public media discourses confront strict government censorship and the public media institutions themselves are usually straitjacketed by strict government controls in terms of licence issuing, personnel control and funding allocations (Van Dijk, 1996; Zhao, 1998; Li, 2000; Donald et al, 2002; Lee, 2003; Zhao and Sun, 2007; Shirk, 2011). Therefore, only if homeowners can manage to build up strong enough personal connections with the journalists and leaders of public media institutions, which is less likely given the homeowners' disadvantaged status, is there is a chance that the public media will represent their opposition to the local state.

Instead, the cost-free "stand-off actions", or "blocking strategy", which involve "physically

occupying homes and farms slated for demolition” (Hsing, 2010: 18), is the most popular protest strategy among Chinese homeowners in fighting for higher compensation and better relocation housing. This strategy is also adopted by residents in other countries. In Seoul, South Korea, a group of tenants, who refused to move out of their properties and hindered the construction project, successfully won higher compensation and 50 years tenure over public rental flats as relocation properties (Shin, 2009). In Cardiff, UK, some local small businesses refused to vacate the land scheduled for comprehensive regeneration, with the hope of fighting for a better offer that would cover their loss of business (Imrie and Thomas, 1997). Also, in the USA, during the state-led, large scale urban renewal movement in the 1950s, individuals holding out– being the last to sell and therefore to capture the inflated prices in an assembly of properties - became a major problem for the state but also a key strategy for individuals to win higher compensation (see for example, Munch, 1976; Imrie and Thomas, 1997; Dobbs, 2002; Olds, et al, 2002; Pritchett, 2003). In China’s context, the blocking strategy used by homeowners is, in essence, “betting on time”. Explaining this, Zhang comments that Chinese homeowners who adopt a blocking strategy “know from the beginning that they will have to leave eventually, but they hope that the delay may put pressure on the counterpart who is eager to clear the ground for construction” (Zhang, 2004: 268). Underpinning homeowners’ blocking strategy is an assumption that the developers will act to maximise economic benefits. In other words, the residents expect the developers to make concessions and pay them higher compensation, which is a relatively small cost when considering the huge risks and costs induced by a delayed project, such as the substantial administrative penalty for not completing the project by the due date, and the risk that the bank cuts off loans if construction is delayed too long. By adopting a blocking strategy, many Chinese homeowners successfully win the opportunity to negotiate with the developers, and many of them get better compensation offers.

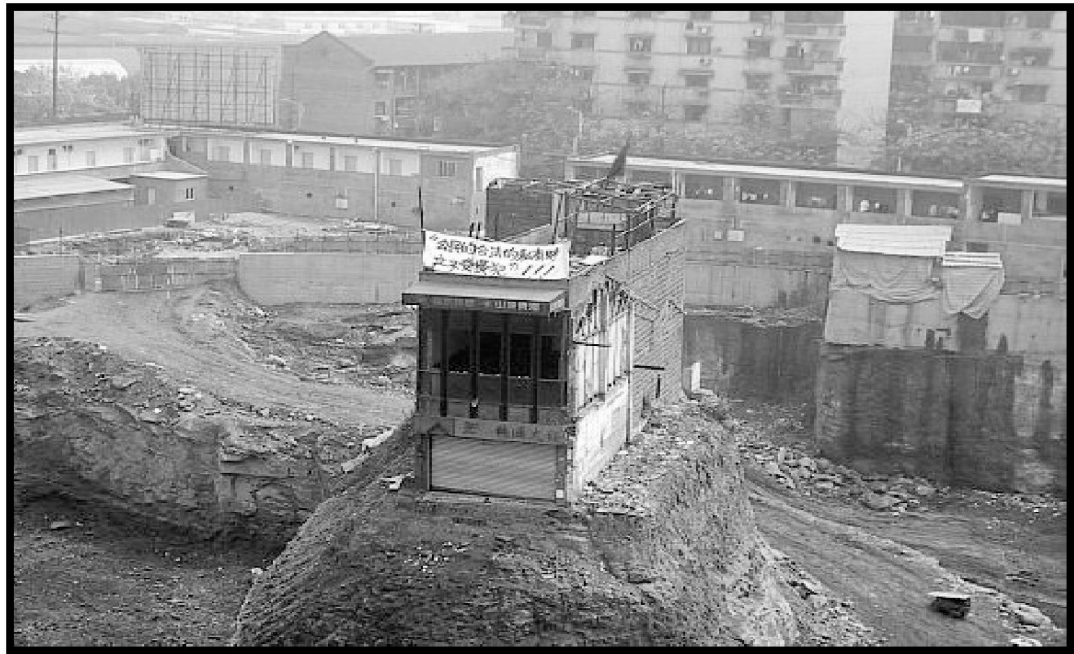
However, for a long period, Chinese homeowners’ blocking actions have formed de facto illegal behaviour. This is due to China’s unclear private property rights, induced by the partial land and housing reforms failing to provide a proper legal basis for homeowners’ stay-put activities. As chapter 1 has shown, in the 1980s, the use right of China’s urban land was marketised, but the ownership remained with the state, meanwhile housing was privatised through selling to the

individuals but there were no formal legal documents to enforce their property rights. Under this background, the illegality of China's homeowners' stay-put action lies in the contradictions between the clearly defined state's rights and the unclearly defined individuals' rights. In other words, Chinese homeowners' blocking action involves individuals occupying the properties that they have no legal ownership over, and hindering the local state in enacting its legal rights over reclaiming publicly owned urban land.

The publication of the property rights law, by China's central state in 2007, which prescribed individuals' legal rights over private properties, including housing, finally provided the legal basis for Chinese homeowners' blocking strategy. One of the most well-known blocking actions happened in Chongqing, was carried out by one family in 2007 just after publication of the new law. Claiming higher compensation, the family refused to move out of their house and occupied the property while the entire neighbourhood was demolished. The family hung out banners outside their house, on which they quoted from the new property rights law, "individuals' legal private property should be protected and should not be violated" (see **Figure 2.1**). It is not only that the legal arguments started to be used by Chinese homeowners, but, using legal discourse itself meant that Chinese homeowners' protest actions adopted a new form, that is, so called "rightful resistance". According to O'Brien, rightful resistance involves the "innovative use of laws, policies, and other officially promoted values" to defend one's legal rights (1996: 33); and, therefore, it is one type of resistance that "operates partly within (yet in tension with) official norms, ... depends on a degree of accommodation with a structure of domination, the deft use of prevailing cultural conventions, and an affirmation - sometimes sincere, sometimes strategic - of existing channels of inclusion" (1996: 32). According to O'Brien, rightful resistance, which uses "the vocabulary of the regime to advance ... claims", is in its nature "disruptive" but not "unlawful"; it informs an attempt to seek a "contractual approach to political life", and is a quintessential "critique within the hegemony" (1996: 34-5). This form of resistance could provide people with certain political "protection when their plans go awry" (O'Brien, 1996: 35), and this is why, under China's political regime which enforces strong repression over individuals' resistance activities, many of China's popular protests adopt the form of rightful resistance. In terms of China's property rights activism, following the Chongqing family, many other homeowners started to use

legal discourse during their (blocking) protest action. While rightful resistance is primarily, and most usually, observed in Chinese rural areas, it seems that now Chinese urban homeowners are starting to join the tide of rightful resistance.

Figure 2.1. Chongqing resident occupying the house



Dates: 2007, March

Source: <http://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E9%87%8D%E5%BA%86%E6%9D%A8%E5%AE%B6%E5%9D%AA%E6%8B%86%E8%BF%81%E4%BA%8B%E4%BB%B6>

This Chongqing family's blocking action was extensively reported by the Chinese media back then and became one of the most well-known and famous property rights protests in China. Reporting this event, the Chinese news media invented a new nickname for the family, the "nail household" (Ding Zi Hu). The term "nail household" compares the family who refuse to move and are blocking the progress of the construction project to the nail that fixes into the land, and which is hard to remove and clear away. Many writers imply that the term is discriminatory. In Shin's sense, with the name nail household, the protesters "have been portrayed in negative images by government officials who may claim them to be of nuisance or the occupiers as trouble-makers" (2013: 7). Also according to Hsing, by calling the residents nail households, they are "presented as uncooperative

and opportunistic negotiators for higher compensation and are accused of sacrificing the public interests for personal gain, and even of causing housing price hikes" (2010: 78). However, in fact, the name nail household is rather contradictory in meaning. In reporting Chongqing family's blocking action in 2007, the Chinese news media used the term nail households in an unqualified way: some of them used it as a negative term as Shin and Hsing have interpreted; but others, by calling the family nail household, actually complimented their stubborn but heroic and vanguard behaviour in claiming citizens' legal rights, and in confronting the developers and the powerful local state. Now in China, those homeowners who protest and take blocking action, are normally called nail households, and, by using this term, the contradictory attitudes towards the protesters remain. The Chinese news media's contradictory attitudes towards nail households actually reflects the Chinese state's ambivalent attitudes. The state's repressive regime, which used to be ruthless towards suppressing Chinese homeowners' protests, has now softened in the face of the protesters' rightful claims to their legal property rights that the state has granted to the people.

According to Castells (1983), urban struggles can be classified as urban social movements "only when they combine activism around collective consumption with struggles for community culture and political self-management, ... that is, capable of transforming urban meanings, and to produce a city organized on the basis of use values, autonomous local cultures and decentralized participatory democracy" (quoted from Mayer, 2009: 364). Against this rather normative definition, Chinese homeowners' protests cannot form urban social movements in any sense. They are, instead, individualised protests, which are criticised by Shin as lacking meaningful alliance not only among homeowners themselves but also among homeowners and private renters, and reflecting only Chinese homeowners' "selfish pursuit of the notion of 'just us'" (2013: 11). In addition, Chinese homeowners' protests focus on issues of compensation and relocation housing, and have no such ambition of gaining better control over the decision making process and the urban development agenda. What Chinese homeowners' protests form, therefore, in Hobsbawm's words, is grassroots struggle and "working the system to their minimum disadvantage" (Hobsbawm, 1973: 7, in Scott, 1985: 301).

However, Chinese homeowners' protests and resistance activities have their own significance. As

the previous argument has shown, by adopting individualised forms of protest, Chinese homeowners skilfully avoid the political risks attached to a collective movement; a most impressive achievement is how Chinese homeowners have exploited the discourse of the new property rights law and used it in their rightful resistance and to soften the state's repressive power. Chinese homeowners' protests, in their specific forms, strategies and discourses, therefore, are a creative way of protesting under the Chinese political regime and state repression institutions. Even more so, they inform how Chinese homeowners skilfully capture, exploit, and engage with "the structure of domination (and pierce the hegemony) at its weakest point" (O'Brien, 1996: 55).

Over the past three decades, China's urbanization and urban redevelopment projects have been conducted at such a large-scale and have proceeded at a rapid pace. Substantial funding, deregulated land use planning, and other policy supports, have been provided by China's local state, paving the road for rapid development to continue in the future. However, residents' blocking strategy signifies a major hindrance to this ambition. Residents' blocking actions have become so common, and, sometimes seriously, delay the progress of the construction work, raising developers' costs, including the extra salary paid to construction workers and company employees during the protracted negotiation process, or the higher compensation offered to the residents to make them move. Forced expropriation, eviction and demolition forms such an efficient approach to tackle residents' blocking actions, by compulsorily removing people and bulldozing any obstacles in the way of development. In China's context, legislation and urban policies have prescribed the local state's power, as well as its legitimacy, in using a forced eviction and demolition approach in urban development projects. As I will demonstrate in the next section, forced expropriation, eviction and demolition form crucial government strategies in China's urbanization process.

2.3. Rapid development as priority: Forced eviction and demolition in China's context

Residents' blocking strategy, in Phan's sense, signifies a way in "which the economically and

politically disadvantaged can carve out a space for themselves, in a world of competing interests” (2005: 36). Forced expropriation, eviction and demolition are how the public authorities usually react. In China as well as in other countries, these approaches have been used so often in urban renewal and regeneration. In the USA, it is through the power of eminent domain that the state compulsorily expropriates the land and property of those who refuse to sell; in the UK, it is through issuing Compulsory Purchase Orders that the municipal government acquires people’s properties, creating integrated land sites from fragmented ownership, for comprehensive regeneration projects; in Istanbul, Turkey, a brutal forced eviction and demolition process has occurred, involving the use of police power and “high-pressure water cannons to disperse” the residents (Lovering and Türkmen, 2011: 90; see also, Agbola and Jinadu, 1997; Olds, et al, 2002; Dobbs, 2002; Du Plessis, 2005; Shin, 2008; Farouk and Owusu, 2012; Harvey, 2012; Uysal, 2012). Forced expropriation, eviction and demolition, as in Harvey’s sense, informs one of “those moments of creative destruction where the economy of wealth-accumulation piggy-backs violently on the economy of dispossession” (2012: 25).

While forced expropriation, eviction and demolition form a violation of people’s private properties, in China as well as in other countries, endless efforts have been made to reinvent these as “acts of governance rather than violation” (Bhan, 2009: 131). This is done, primarily, through seeking legitimacy under the existing legal framework. In Delhi, India, it is through defining the poor as illegal citizens in the courts that the forced demolition of their housing, the so called urban slum, is justified; in the USA, while the Fifth Amendment “limits eminent domain to the taking of ‘private property... for public use’”, contestations and reinterpretations over the meaning of “public use” finally extended it to equal “public purpose”, so that nearly any development projects, as long as they produce certain economic benefits, can be said to be fitting public purpose and legitimise using eminent domain (Kelly, 2006: 10). Analogous to these countries, China’s state authorities also seek to justify forced demolition through interpreting the law. In doing this, a central legal clause being drawn upon is one in the property rights law, which dictates that “for public interests, and according to legal procedures, land under collective ownership, and the real-estate properties under work units and individuals’ ownership, can be forcefully expropriated”. However the meaning of the “public interest” is never clearly defined, either in the property rights

law itself or by other laws. This leads to the abuse of the use of “public interest”, as well as the forced eviction and demolition conducted in its name, around Chinese cities. Chinese localities have found the ambiguous term “public interest” as a convenient master key that can be applied to nearly every situation– giving it the ability to construct new roads, public schools, or to develop new shopping malls, high-tech parks and even golf courses - all can be interpreted as fitting the “public interest” in certain ways. In the past three decades, the houses of millions of Chinese families have been demolished in the name of enhancing the “public interest”- an ambiguous term and in so many cases a cover for commercial interests. Indeed, as Imrie and Thomas comment, the public interest informs a legal ideology which serves to enable certain material interests and overwhelm the others (1997; see also, Blackman, 1991).

Besides the instrumentalised “public interest” discourse which provides legitimacy for the government’s forced expropriation process, the reason why a forced eviction and demolition approach is abused in Chinese cities is also due to the fact that the local state, a key party in the urban development process, seeking land-based interests and shaping growth coalitions with developers, is empowered to issue forced demolition orders. As stated in Urban Housing Demolition Management Ordinance (UHDMO), a policy document published by the central state in 2001, the local authorities, usually urban planning, or municipal land resources and property management departments, when facing “residents who refused to move out by the due date”, have the power to decide whether to issue forced demolition permissions to the developers and the demolition companies. This clause is criticized by Chinese researchers and legal commentators as giving the local state unrestricted and unsupervised power in the land clearance process, and that China’s local state is both player and judge in the game. One consequence of this is that China’s local state, which is keen to end the residents’ blocking strategy, rubber-stamps developers’ applications for forced demolition.

A prominent element of the forced eviction and demolition process is the use of coercive power, defined by Allen as “the ability to influence conduct through the threat of negative sanctions” (2003: 60). In the Chinese context, forced eviction and demolition will usually proceed in the following way. It will start with the local authorities, normally the street offices, sending warning

letters to the targeted residents, which, by adopting harsh and unpleasant tones, urge them to move out by the due date. This will normally be followed by the action of painting the Chinese character, “Chai”, meaning to demolish, on the walls of the targeted buildings (see **Figure 2.2**). According to Chau (2008), painting the character Chai on the wall informs power-infused “text acts”, through which Chinese public authorities intend to exert command over, instead of communication with, their audience. While Chai means “to demolish”, Chau implies that the character not only expresses the semantic meaning, but it also delivers other symbolic meanings through the form it takes, such as that the word Chai is usually painted in red to forcefully attract attention, and the word is intentionally drawn in an ugly way to uglify the building targeted for demolition. In the end, the demolition companies’ construction teams and bulldozers will arrive and dismantle the housing. The residents who still refuse to leave at this point will be forcefully dragged out of their rooms. The scene is supervised by public sector staff, usually from the urban management department (Cheng Guan Zhi Fa), who dress in uniforms to announce government involvement and the exertion of administrative power (see **Figure 2.3**).

Figure 2.2. The symbol of “Chai”



Dates: 2012, October

Source: photo taken by the author

Figure 2.3. Uniforms on the scene of forced demolition



Dates: 2012, September

Source: photo taken by the author

Outside the local authorities' purview, developers also conduct illegal behaviour, without government permission, in order to accelerate the land clearance process. This usually involves the developer contracted demolition companies, and thugs hired by the latter, to create a difficult living environment for the residents, and even to threaten residents' personal safety, with the purpose of forcing the residents to end their blocking actions and to drive them out of the community. Typical situations include cutting the electricity wires and breaking the water pipes, pouring garbage on the doorways, and smashing windows. Sometimes more violent situations occur, such as described by Weinstein and Ren, that "hired thugs have been known to set fire to houses, or to tear them down when residents are not home or in the night when they are sleeping" (2009: 420); or the story told by Hsing, that "residents were blindfolded and taken from their homes by force, when blindfolds were removed, the only thing the residents saw was the rubble of their former homes" (2009: 31). Similar illegal, and brutal land clearance processes also happen in other countries, such as in Seoul, South Korea, where, according to Harvey, in the 1990s, "the construction companies and developers hired goon squads of sumo-wrestler types to invade

whole neighbourhoods and smash down with sledgehammers not only the housing but also all the possessions" (2012: 19).

This type of forced demolition is also termed by Chinese writers as "barbarian demolition" (Weinstein and Ren, 2009), or considered as informing some kind of "property management terrorism" that uses violence to "silence and intimidate homeowner activists... who dare challenge" (Lee, 2008: 17). This is illegal behaviour which China's local state claims to have stopped. However, in the past three decades, developers' illegal forced demolition behaviour has never stopped being popular in Chinese cities. The widespread extent is partly due to the leniency of government regulations. As stated in UHDMO, only a small penalty, in a "range from twenty to fifty RMB for each square meters being demolished", will be charged if the demolition company does not gain government permission beforehand. No further liabilities will be pursued.

Many Chinese legal commentators and scholars criticise this regulation as signifying China's central and local state's strong pro-development sentiment, and that they never really mean to stop developers' illegal forced demolition behaviour, which works so well in ending residents' blocking actions. They only care enough to make a gesture to show people that they have tried. In other words, what Chinese intellectuals imply is that China's pro-development state takes rapid development as its priority, and it would rather close its eyes to developers' illegal behaviour as long as it brings rapid development. This is reflected in policymaking which connives with developers' illegal forced demolition behaviour. The critique of China's pro-development state and its pro-development urban policy making can also be applied to another policy clause, which is also included in UHDMO. It declares that, within three months of receiving the government's forced expropriation orders, "residents with different opinions can charge a law suit, ... but during the law suit the forced demolition process should continue and should not stop". The litigation right is granted to residents but not at the expense of sacrificing rapid development.

With pro-development as the dominant government rationale, China's forced eviction and demolition process is (re)created like a griffin, with government orders and developers and thugs' threats being issued side by side, the government officials, police forces and developers'

canvassers cooperate with each other. So many legal and illegal behaviours are weaved together that the forms they take are less important than accelerating the land clearance and development process. An appropriate case to illustrate how bizarre China's forced eviction and demolition process can be, is Jiahe township's development of a small-business convention centre in 2004. The project involved demolishing several residential communities and relocating approximately one thousand households. More than three hundred households refused to accept the compensation offer and chose to undertake a blocking strategy. Responding to this, Jiahe's local authorities hung out threatening slogans around the town, which, arguably followed the suggestions of the developer, stating that those "who dare to slow down Jiahe's development for a while, will be punished for a lifetime". The government officials, including those from the street offices, urban planning, land resources and property management departments, visited the residents and persuaded them to move out. Simultaneously the residents were also harried by the thugs that were hired by the developer, who blocked door locks, smashed windows and destroyed the community's garbage bins. Many residents were also suspended from their jobs, no matter where they worked, government departments, SOEs or private companies, and received warnings from their bosses that they would be fired if they did not move out by the due date. In the end, dozens of police officers forcefully dragged residents out of their rooms, while the developers' bulldozers demolished the communities to the ground (Xin Lang News Archive).

China's forced eviction and demolition process has been created as a leviathan, so powerful and violent, that no residents can possibly fight back. While it has accelerated China's urbanization, the forced eviction and demolition process has overturned residents' blocking actions, and the best chance for people to win higher compensation and better relocation housing (see section 2.2), is violent resistance. These resistance activities sometimes involve extreme behaviour, such as self-immolation, through which the residents no longer seek rights but only aim to declare their anger and pursue revenge. The most well-known such incidents include Tang, a female resident who set fire to herself in 2009, denouncing the developers for demolishing her house without consent; and also this year, male resident Xu used a self-made bomb to target the demolition companies' office buildings. These events are intensively reported by Chinese and foreign public media, and are recorded and used by international human rights organizations. The number of

such violent resistance incidents has increased significantly in the past decade, and, in a cruel way, they have finally alerted China's central state of a coming storm which could endanger the state's political legitimacy and cause social instability. Since the mid 2000s, the central state has held a series of internal meetings to discuss and conceive reform initiatives. These have finally led to the publication of a series of governmental documents and policies in 2010 and 2011, through which the central state has instituted political and institutional reforms, to regulate the forced eviction and demolition process at the local level.

2.4. Balancing social stability and rapid development: Central state interventions and new government initiatives

As discussed in chapter 1, while Chinese localities have become increasingly more autonomous over local development agendas, China's central state retains strong political control over local officials, deciding their promotion and the future of their political careers. Because of this, taking and following the central state's will and orders are important for local officials in order to accumulate political capital and attain a better chance of promotion. A primary mechanism for the central state to deliver its will and exert control, as well as for the local officials to perceive, follow and enact, is the various government internal documents that are issued by central state departments, including various types of Decisions, Ordinances and Notices. It is also through issuing a series of governmental documents that the central state seeks to regulate the land clearance process conducted by China's localities.

In 2010 and 2011, three of China's central state departments issued a series of governmental documents, which accentuated two points: that localities should ban the illegal forced demolition behaviour, and the local state should reduce the use of forced demolition orders. The first of these documents, named Urgent Notice of Further Regulating Land Expropriation Work and Protecting People's Legal Rights, was published by the General Office of the State Council in 2010. It defines illegal forced demolition activities, which include "cutting off the water, electricity and destroying the roads and transportation, ... and other violent and threatening approaches, ... as well as

involving thugs and abusing the police forces in the land expropriation process". It orders the localities to stop using this illegal behaviour during land clearance, otherwise local government leaders and directors will be "held responsible and traced for legal liability". In addition, the document also suggests that local officials "strictly censor the enactment of forced expropriation orders, ... (making sure the expropriation process) abides by the legal procedures, and is based upon appropriate compensation and relocation arrangements". Responding later that year, the Ministry of Land and Resources issued a document of Notice of Further Regulating the Work of Land Expropriation, further detailing how local land resource departments should behave in the land expropriation process. Besides echoing the General Office's orders on banning illegal activities, this document also suggests that the local land resource departments should "engage in policy propaganda, explaining, and thought grooming of the mass, focusing on winning people's understanding and support, instead of using a compulsory expropriation approach". Also, in 2011, the Discipline and Inspection Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, a central state institution responsible for supervising and punishing party members, issued a document, Notice of Further Supervision, Inspection and Regulation of the Land Expropriation Process. The document recounts the General Office's orders on "banning illegal behaviours such as cutting off water, heat and electricity ... and other violent, threatening approaches ... in the land expropriation process". It also warns local officials that they will be "strictly punished" if they are "not following the orders, violating the bans, continuing to use police force in the land expropriation process, and causing negative social events because of improper working styles and dereliction of duty".

The central state's actions of issuing orders and warnings have quickly escalated to punishing the violators. In 2011, the central state announced a total of fifty-seven local officials, including one at province-level, and four at municipal-level, accused of violating the central state's orders, as they had connived in the involvement of thugs, using violent activities, threatening the residents, as well as other illegal behaviour in the land clearance process; and these officials were also accused as being responsible for residents' injuries and death. This announcement was reported and disseminated around the country through news programmes on CCTV (China Central Television), the mouthpiece of the Party. When reporting the central state's decision on punishing the

fifty-seven officials, CCTV focused on the city of Changchun, where one resident was buried and died when the demolition company forcefully dismantled the building during the night. The focus on Changchun was because the punishment there was harsh: the mayor was ordered by the central state to make a public apology to Changchun citizens, the deputy mayor received the punishment of recording a demerit, and another nine local officials, including those from the police force, land resources and property management, were dismissed and charged with legal liability. The public conviction and punishment of these officials forms a typical approach of how China's central state exerts its political power, namely focusing on creating an example, through punishing a few in high-profile ways, thus warning the others and leaving them in awe of what might happen to them.

Besides exerting political control over local officials, the central state also sponsors institutional reform in regulating the land clearance process at the local level. According to the previous section, a primary reason for the abuse of a forced demolition approach in Chinese cities is that the local state is empowered to issue forced demolition orders. To deal with this, under a new policy, Ordinance of Expropriation and Compensation of Housing on State Owned Land, which was published by the central state in 2011, the local state no longer has such power. Instead, issuing forced demolition orders is reserved as a power of the court, with the policy stating that, "when the residents refuse to accept compensation offers and refuse to move out by the due date, the municipal and township people's government can apply to the court for enacting forced demolition".

In section 2.2, I point out that in China's context, the legal system is not independent from administrative power and the local state often intervenes in court decisions. Therefore the new policy, although giving the courts' power to issue forced demolition orders, does not signify that courts will not rubber-stamp the local state's applications for enacting forced eviction and demolition. Although this curbing of the local state's powers is only in appearance, the new policy still brings significant changes in the meanings and power relationships involved in the land expropriation process in Chinese cities. Forced expropriation and demolition is no longer an unrestricted and unsupervised power of the local authority, or a convenient tool used by the

pro-development local state to accelerate the land clearance process without any thirty-party intervention (see section 2.3 for more detailed discussion). Instead, the issuing of forced demolition orders has now become a legal process that the local state has to abide by, at least on the surface. Or, in other words, as many Chinese legal commenters point out, now China's local state has a new "law abiding responsibility" during the land clearance process, that is, it has to play along with the regulations in the new policy, apply to the courts and wait for the completion of the protracted legal process to issue forced demolition orders. During this process, the local state has no legal rights to remove people and end their blocking strategy. The local state's power over using a forced demolition approach in the local urban development process is, therefore, weakened.

China's central state's reforms, therefore, at least, seek to induce face-saving effects in the urbanization process - to eliminate illegal and violent behaviour and restrain the abuse of government power, and to reshape the land clearance process to be less confrontational but more ordered and law-abiding. But deep down, the fundamental economic and political regimes underpinning China's urbanization process remain unchanged and the desire and motivations for accelerating the land clearance process and urban development are still strong. More specifically, in the Chinese context, rapid urbanization is still essential for China's central state to restore its political legitimacy, and for the local state to resolve its financial crisis (see chapter 1). Therefore, it remains a central interest for the Chinese state to maintain the land clearance, urban development and urbanization process at a rapid pace.

The real intention of the reforms by China's central state is therefore to renew the governance processes so that land clearance and urban development at the local level can continue at a rapid pace, but involve alternative and better government initiatives. This point can be evidenced from the speech of the Chinese Prime Minister Li. In a State Council executive meeting that was held in 2013, commenting on the recent reforms in urban land expropriation, Li accentuated that the localities should continue to "accelerate the remodelling of inner city shanty towns, promote economic development as well as people's lives, ... (but) people's will should be respected, forced eviction and demolition should be strictly banned, people's legal rights should be protected, *things*

should be done in a better way" (Li, 2013, no page, emphasis added by the author). The Prime Minister's viewpoint is also repeated through other Party and central state mouthpieces, such as the People's Daily News Paper. In 2011, when commenting on the publication of the new policy, Ordinance of Expropriation and Compensation of Housing on State Owned Land, the People's Daily encouraged localities to explore new governance initiatives and conduct land expropriation in a more civil and harmonious way; and, it pointed out that the real intention of the policy reform was to enhance localities' governance capability,

"China's urbanization is a megatrend. We understand the local governors' hardships and difficulties during this 'demolishing the old and building the new process'. ... When some localities cut off the water supply and electricity, using forced and illegal ways to evict residents, other places are actively exploring new mechanisms in conducting compensation and relocation. ... Behind different expropriation and demolition behaviours lie the differences in the ability of governance. ... Whether the localities can properly handle the relationships among economic development, social stability, and protecting people's well-being, whether they can realize legal, civil and harmonious land expropriation process, signify the localities' governance capability." (People's Daily, 2011, no page).

China's central state's reforms put the localities into a quandary: on the one hand, the localities must manage to continue the rapid urban development and urbanization process, because the central state requires this, as well as urbanization being key to solving the local financial crisis and for local officials to accumulate political capital; on the other hand, the localities are deprived of one of their most powerful and efficient tools in accelerating urban development, that is, forced eviction and demolition, because using this presents high political risks and confronts them with institutional constraints. Therefore, for Chinese localities, reforms and changes are urgent and imperative, and the reforms should inform new government initiatives that can fulfill the aims of both rapid urbanization and alternatives to forced demolition. How, then, facing these challenges and imperatives, will Chinese localities respond? What new government initiatives, measures and processes will they sponsor? How will these new government initiatives inform new forms of governmentality, new power relationships between the central and local, the state and society? These are the questions I will continue to explore in the remainder of this thesis.

2.5. Conclusion

This chapter examines the contestations around China's current urbanization process. The contestations are embodied in grassroots resistance activities and protests, through which residents are fighting for higher compensation and better relocation housing; as well as the forced expropriation, eviction and demolition process that is sponsored by China's local authorities, with the purpose of accelerating the land clearance process and bulldozing any barriers in the way of rapid development. I argue that the forced demolition approach is abused in Chinese cities, analyse the reasons for its rampancy, and point out how it leads to serious social instability and has finally induced the central state's interventions and reform initiatives.

By examining the central state's reform initiatives, I argue that they are not to slow down the rapid urbanization process, but for the purpose of reshaping and readjusting the governance process at the local level. I outline the questions that this research seeks to explore: how will the reforms by the Chinese central state induce changes in the government initiatives, governance process, and the adoption of new forms of governmentality, at the local level? In particular, how true is Pieke's claim that the transformation in Chinese governmentality informs a "more powerful and resourceful and less direct and invasive" state (2012: 149)? I will examine these questions through focusing on one of Qingdao's regeneration projects in 2012. Before turning to focus on Qingdao's case, I will firstly examine the methods and methodology issues in the next chapter.

Chapter 3 Studying Chinese cities: methods, practices and reflections

3.1. Introduction

This research explores one residents' committee (RC) and its role in a regeneration project in Qingdao, a coastal city in China. I explore the committee's activities in community regeneration, and seek to evaluate how far it is indicative of new approaches to conducting community regeneration. On a broader level, this research seeks to understand Chinese RCs' functions in urban governance, addressed through exploring the restructuring of state functions, the rescaling of state-society relationships, and how these processes relate to the emerging agendas and activities of RCs.

The fieldwork was conducted from September 2012 to May 2013, a period in which the case study neighbourhood, No.19 Fushun Road in Qingdao, was enlisted into an inner city redevelopment plan, and the residents were being relocated and their buildings demolished. In this chapter, I discuss the study's aims and objectives, and outline the research design, data collection and modes of analysis deployed. Section 3.2 outlines the research questions. Section 3.3 discusses the reasons to study the city of Qingdao, and draws and reflects on a post-colonial urban studies which claims to take marginalised urban experiences into account (McFarlane, 2010; Robinson, 2002). Section 3.4 reviews the literature on case studies and introduces the case of this research, No.19 Fushun Road community in Qingdao. Section 3.5 examines data collection and analysis methods adopted by this research. Section 3.6 explores issues of accessing and research ethics and draws reflections on power relationships I have confronted in the field with research subjects. Section 3.7 concludes the arguments in this chapter.

3.2. Research questions

This research explores the following questions,

- i What are RCs' functions and agendas in community regeneration and urban governance?

- | Which government techniques are used in governing RCs, whether, and in what sense, have these techniques (re)shaped and prescribed RCs' agendas and accountability?
- | What is residents' experience in community regeneration, and how does it relate to RCs' activities?
- | How do we understand China's neoliberal transition, in relation to RCs' roles in urban governance?

The primary aim of this research is to understand reform initiatives at China's local level, concerning urban renewal and regeneration, with a focus on one RC's role in delivering policies in the community. I explore the RC's relationships with local government authorities to understand whether, and in what ways, the latter may be shaping the committee's agendas and activities in community redevelopment projects. In addition, the reason I am also studying the RC's relationships with local residents, is to develop a critical vision of the nature and agendas of the RC. More specifically, I examine whether, and in what sense, the RC locates/dislocates its accountabilities from local residents; and in what sense its (dislocated) accountability is the reason for residents' experiences in urban regeneration, especially those which I call oppression and domination (see chapter 7). Based upon an understanding of this RC's activities in urban renewal and regeneration, I will shed light more broadly on the role of RCs in urban governance. The latter aim will be addressed by exploring whether, and how far, RCs' functions and agendas signify the restructuring of state functions, and the changing relationships between state and society, as well as the changing calculation and rationality of government in China's society.

3.3. Qingdao, an "ordinary city": From paradigmatic urbanism to comparative urban study

Urban experiences and practices in advanced liberal societies dominate the field of production of urban theory and knowledge (Keil, 1998; Dear, 1999; Robinson, 2002). Recounting this point, McFarlane (2010) comments that urban studies were, and are still, framed by a paradigmatic urbanism. Many metropolises in the US and cities in the UK, are the focus of urban research, as well as the sites where knowledge is produced and reproduced. Urban experiences in these places,

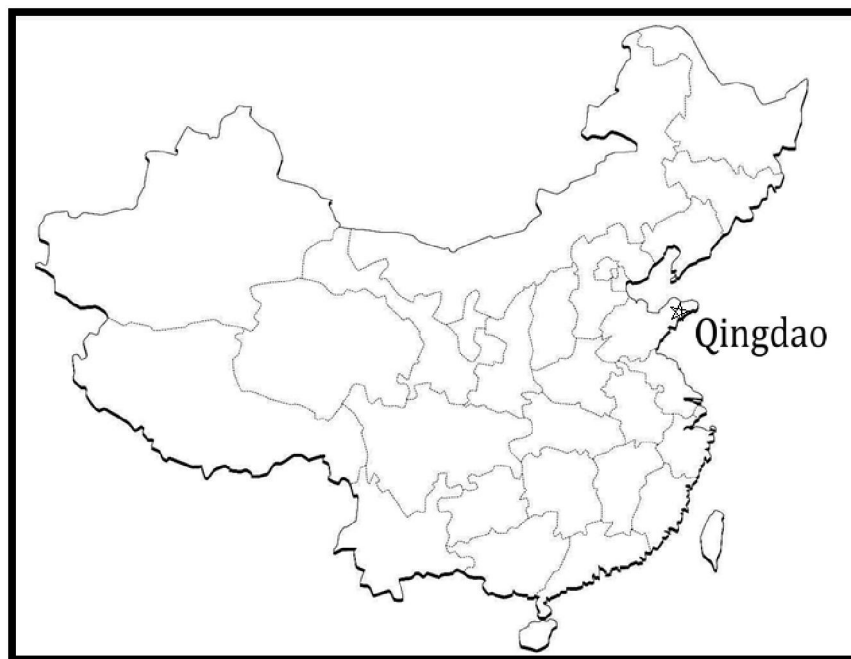
somehow, signify “urban paradigms”, dominating our understanding on urban modernization, good planning practices and development policies. In addition, these cities’ experiences also signify a deeply embedded standard that prescribes our perceptions on “other kinds of urban possibilities or imaginaries” (McFarlane, 2010: 725-6). More specifically, as McFarlane explains, “our conceptions of the city are often premised on the experiences and theoretical work based upon cities in Western Europe and North America, and cities outside of the ‘global North’ are thus often understood in relation to those referent objects” (2010: 276). Responding to this point, Robinson (2001, 2008) comments that in urban studies, we still meet with a colonial culture, embodied in the lack of recognition of cultural diversity, local intellects, and specificity of local development trajectories.

To challenge the paradigmatic urbanism in urban studies, McFarlane proposes a comparative urban studies approach, which involves seeing comparison not just as a method, but as a strategy for doing urban study, “a mode of thought that informs how urban theory is constituted” (2010: 725). Comparison as a research strategy entails a reflection on, as in McFarlane’s words, how the experiences of non-western cities “might cause us to rethink urban knowledge and urban theory”, as well as “how we might bring other urban experiences, knowledges and theories into a more horizontal comparative field” (2010: 726). In other words, we need to draw upon a process to reflect upon the dominations of culture and current structures and modes of knowledge production, to “think about comparison politically” (McFarlane, 2010: 726).

The reason for choosing Qingdao as the site of study is, partly, a response to these discussions and to engage in a practice of dissolving the paradigm in urban studies. In the past two decades, while an emerging literature gives interest to Chinese cities, it focuses on limited metropolises such as Beijing and Shanghai. Qingdao, and many other smaller Chinese cities’ experiences are less known and represented in the existing writing. By studying Qingdao, this research echoes Robinson’s calls for a post-colonial urban studies, to give an account of those urban experiences which have been until now marginalised, and, to restructure a knowledge reproduction process in urban studies that is currently dominated by urban practices in advanced liberal societies.

The city of Qingdao is located in Shandong Province (see **Figure 3.1**). Currently the population size of Qingdao is 8.7 million. Qingdao's urban landscape represents a visual clash. The spatial differentiation between the coastal zone and inner city area is sharp, and has been shaped, since the early 1990s, by property-led development, which has (overly) invested in the high-value coastal land. Along the coastline, and around the edge of the city is a "modernized landscape" where elegant skyscrapers stand, and through which Qingdao exports to the world its globalized image. The inner city contains massive shanty towns, and, many working class neighbourhoods that were constructed, between the 1950s and the 1980s, by state-owned factories. Along with market reform and the bankruptcy of large numbers of state-owned factories since the 1990s, Qingdao's inner city became a place where jobless people congregate. Many residential buildings in the inner city are now considered problematic by the urban planners, because of their lack of modernized facilities such as heating and water systems, and private toilets. For Qingdao's planners and officials, the inner city lacks a sense of modernization, and is a tainted part of the urban landscape.

Figure 3.1. Location of Qingdao



Source: map by the author

In the past twenty years, Qingdao's inner city has witnessed relentless demolition plans sponsored by the local government authorities. A recent plan was sponsored by the municipal government in 2010, aiming to redevelop 1.7 million m² of the inner city, within a five year period (2012-2016), and affecting 50,000 households (approximately 200,000-300,000 people). The task for 2012 was to "dismantle 20 dilapidated communities and clear an area of 320,000 m²" (Qingdao Government Work Report, 2012). 9,754 households (approximately 35,000-55,000 people) would be displaced in 2012 and awaited rehousing opportunities. The case of this research, No.19 Fushun Road, would be the first residential compound to be demolished in 2012.

3.4. Case study

In order to understand how Qingdao's local government authorities conceptualise, design, and implement policy reforms in terms of conducting community (re)development, this research focuses on one case, the development of No.19 Fushun Road in 2012, a residential compound in Qingdao, located in Nan Shan Residents' Committee's neighbourhood (see **Figure 3.2**). Drawing on the redevelopment project for No.19 in 2012 as a case study, this research explores the Committee's activities, agendas and functions in urban renewal, and unpacks the Committee's relationships with local government officials and local residents. A case study approach, as Yin (2005) points out, offers "both descriptive richness and analytic insight into people, events, and passions as played out in real-life environments" (2005: xiv).

Figure 3.2. No.19 Fushun Community



Dates: 2012, September

Source: photo taken by the author

Yin argues that the case study is “the best strategy when ‘how’ or ‘why’ questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context” (1984: 1). Shavelson and Townes (2002) also comment that the case study method is useful to resolve “either a descriptive question (what happened?) or an explanatory question (how or why did something happen?)” (2002: 99). This research sets out to answer descriptive questions, such as, in the face of the central state’s orders forbidding the use of forced demolition activities, what changes and reform initiatives are taking place in Qingdao, and what are residents’ experiences of urban renewal and regeneration. However, it also seeks to explain, and interpret, the politics and power relationships behind the phenomena, posing the questions of how the state exerts its power, where RCs’ accountabilities lie, and how we should understand certain residents’ experiences in community redevelopment projects as oppression.

Making valid generalizations from a small number of cases is often questioned (Platt, 1992).

Sceptics of case studies suggest they are incapable of generalization. Eckstein (2000) argues that case studies are better in testing hypotheses rather than generating theories. Also according to Platt, an individual case only shows “sympathetic pictures” of human society, which are not valued in themselves to produce valid generalizations (1992: 26). Flyvbjerg (2006) provides a persuasive discussion on why the case study provides a valuable method of gaining knowledge in social science, and he confronts critics concerning the generalization, reliability, and validity of a case study approach. Flyvbjerg’s discussion includes, firstly, there is only “context-dependent knowledge and experience” (2006: 392), which is the heart of the case study as a method of learning. Secondly, Flyvbjerg argues that “one can often generalize on the basis of a single case, and the case study may be central to scientific development via generalization as supplement or alternative to other methods. But formal generalization is overvalued as a source of scientific development, whereas ‘the force of example’ is underestimated” (2006: 393). This viewpoint is echoed by Yin (2003), who argues that the goal of doing a case study is to “expand and generalize theories (analytic generalization) and not to enumerate frequencies (statistical generalization)” (2003: 10). In addition, Flyvbjerg contends that the case study is “useful for both generating and testing of hypotheses but is not limited to these research activities alone” (395). Further, he suggests that the “case study contains no greater bias, instead, it contains a greater bias towards falsification of preconceived notions than towards verification” (2006: 399). Lastly, he reminds us that “properties of the reality play a crucial role in the problems of summarizing case studies rather than the case study as a research method. Good studies should be read as narratives in their entirety instead of summarizing and generalizing case studies” (2006: 401-2). Following Flyvbjerg, I argue that using a case study approach will contribute to the development of a contextualised knowledge of No.19’s regeneration, but will also contribute to understanding politics in terms of China’s urban renewal and regeneration more broadly, because, as Mitchell (1983) comments, the case study bears “the cogency of the theoretical reasoning” (1983: 207), and, according to Bryman, we can making the generation from a single case to theory rather than to populations (2008).

No.19’s (re)development represents a typical case. The residential compound was constructed as a workers’ dormitory and a product of the socialist planned economy, which was problematised

after market reform. It mirrors a common fate of many inner city neighbourhoods around Chinese cities. No.19's rise and fall relates to broader economic reform and institutional transformation in China. Indeed, as Flyvbjerg comments, studying atypical case will "clarify the deeper causes behind a given problem" (2006: 95), such as the social and economic regime in a given society, and the rationality of planning.

3.5. Data collection and analysis

The case study is a research design that can incorporate multiple methods of data collection (De Vaus, 2001). A case study approach usually combines qualitative methods with participant observation and in-depth interviews (De Vaus, 2001). The combination, as Jackson (1985) comments, enables the researcher "to convey the inner life and texture of the diverse social enclaves and personal circumstances of societies" (Jackson, 1985: 157), as both the case study design and the qualitative methods pay attention to details, to the complexity of human behaviours, sensing people's feelings and the inner meanings behind the words through human interactions. In the remainder of this section, I will discuss the data collection and analysis methods I use, including document analysis, participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and thematic analysis.

3.5.1. Document analysis

"... (Document analysis is) as a mean of enhancing understanding through the ability to situate contemporary accounts within an historical context. It could also allow comparisons to be made between the observer's interpretations of events and those recorded in documents relating to those events. These sources may also be utilized in their own right. They can tell us a great deal about the way in which events are constructed, the reasons employed, as well as providing materials upon which to base further research investigations." (May, 2011: 191)

According to Merriam (1988), different types of documents can help the researcher to "uncover meaning, develop understanding, and discover insights relevant to the research problem" (1988: 118). A wide range of documents can be used for this purpose, including public, private and personal documents, such as governmental publications, minutes of meetings, personal records,

diaries, journals, books, newspapers, radio and television program scripts, photo albums (Bowen, 2009). In this particular study, the documents I have collected include urban planning, government work reports, policies published by both the central state and Qingdao's local state relating to urban renewal and regeneration, as well as officials' speeches, media reports, journals, online forums and personal diaries published on the internet, which will tell us about the stories and residents' experiences in the community's redevelopment and relocation (see **Table 3.1**).

Documents are socially structured, being produced by social practice (Bryman, 2008), or, as in May's words, documents are embedded in "social, political and economic environments of which they are a part" (May, 2011: 199). When analyzing documents, we should be critical of the purpose, values and power relationships embedded in the production of the documents. This is especially pertinent when analysing news reports on community development. China's news media, including newspapers, and TV news reports, are under strict supervision of the local state and usually function towards propagandising government policies. In Qingdao, while local news reports claim that regeneration is for the welfare of communities, the residents, however, usually hold different opinions. Some residents see their community's redevelopment as a violation of their legal rights, even a disaster in their life because they are forced to leave their homes. Discovering and interpreting these voices is a primary aim of this research.

According to May (2011), we should not only attend to the intended purpose of documents but also the received components of meaning. Atkinson and Coffey (2004) refer to this as discerning the "authorship" and "readership" of documents. More specifically, documents are produced with certain values and purposes from its "author", which are usually received and interpreted differently by its audience. A typical document of this type is "a letter to the residents", which is usually drafted by RCs and dispatched to local residents. The letter uses up-beat words, telling the residents that the community's redevelopment is a valuable opportunity for improving their living conditions, and having a better life. But, this letter is usually satirized by the residents, and seen as proof that the committee is trying hard to push the people out of the community, and to please the government authorities. This attitude of residents may reveal to us the inherent tensions, and distrust, between RCs and local residents.

In addition, I have accessed archive data, primarily from Qingdao's urban archive, for the purpose of understanding Qingdao's history and local culture, and through this, engaging in what is called by May and Powell (2008), a reflection on our relationships with the surroundings and our positionality in the history. It is primarily based upon these archive data that I have written chapter 4 on Qingdao's planning, development, and social changes in the last century.

Table 3.1. Documents collected and analysed (selectively outlined)

Name	Description	Time of publication
Ordinance on Urban Housing Demolition in Qingdao	Public policy	2005
Ordinance of Expropriation and Compensation of Housing on State Owned Land	Public policy	2011
Urgent Notice of Further Regulating Land Expropriation Work and Protecting People's Legal Rights	Government document	2010
Notice of Further Regulating the Work of Land Expropriation	Government document	2010
Chinese Prime Minister Li's speech to State Council executive meeting	Government officials' speech	2013
Qingdao mayor's speech on Asian Bo Ao Forum	Government officials' speech	2013
Forced demolition, when should it stop?	News reports on People's Daily	2011
The awesome nail household in Chongqing	News reports	2007
Jiao Ao Development Memo	Government work report	1908
A letter to residents	A document drafted	2012

	by NSRC	
A legend of Qingdao' alleys	Literature	2009
Fighting for my home	Online blog	2007
How to be a good nail household	Online blog	2004

3.5.2. Participant observation

Participant observation is a popular method used by anthropologists in field study, and is employed in this research. According to Schensul et al (1999), participant observation is "the process of learning through exposure to or involvement in the day-to-day or routine activities of participants in the researcher setting" (1999: 91). It involves a variety of activities and considerations, such as "fitting in, active seeing, short-term memory, informal interviewing, recording detailed field notes, and, perhaps most importantly, patience" (Dewalt and Dewalt, 2002: 17). As Marshall and Rossman (1995) suggest, participant observation can help researchers to check definitions of terms that participants use in interviews, and observe whether situations informants have recounted in interviews are being distorted or are accurate.

After No.19 was enlisted into the city's development plan, Qingdao's municipal government and Shi Bei sub-municipal government held many governmental meetings, some of them attended by NSRC staff, to discuss progress and study strategy. NSRC also organised many meetings in the community, some were for the purpose of propagandising policies. I have participated in and observed nine such meetings (see **Table 3.2**). Participating in these meetings not only let me detect potential interviewees, such as government officials playing key roles in planning and the decision-making process concerning community development; but also, these meetings were very revealing of the power relationships between RC staff, government officials, and local residents, as how they talk and communicate indicates power and position in the hierarchy.

The role that researchers should play at participation meetings has been widely discussed. A "peripheral membership role" is taken, which can enable the researcher to "observe and interact closely enough with members to establish an insider's identity without participating in those activities constituting the core of group membership" (Adler and Adler, 1994: 380). Whether the

researcher adopts an 'overt' or 'covert' role in the observation process can directly influence the activities being observed (Atkinson and Hammersley, 2007). In this case, I adopt an overt approach. I introduced myself at the start of meetings and told them I would observe the meetings and make field notes.

Table 3.2. Meetings observed

Date	Description	Location
05 September 2012	Policy propaganda meeting held by NSRC	NSRC's meeting room
12 September 2012	Meeting held by NSRC for explaining compensation policies to local residents	NSRC's meeting room
13 September 2012	Community representative work meeting held by NSRC	Home of one representative
20 September 2012	Private meetings attended by NSRC staff, representatives from development companies and nail households in No.19	Office of the development company
14 September 2012	NSRC work report meeting with Shi Bei sub-municipal government	Shi Bei sub-municipal government's meeting room
09 September 2012	Consultation meeting held by Qingdao's municipal government	NSRC's meeting room
02 September 2012	NSRC internal meeting	NSRC's meeting room
02 September 2012	Fu Xin street office's internal meeting	Fu Xin street office's meeting room
04 September 2012	Urban planning Bureaucracy's monthly work report meeting	Urban planning Bureaucracy's meeting room
Total= 9		

3.5.3. Semi-structured interviews

Interviewing is a process that seeks to build up interactions between researchers and participants, and through which to “yield rich insights into people’s biographies, experiences, opinions, values, aspirations, attitudes and feelings” (May, 2011: 131). Similarly, according to Kvale and Brinkmann (2009), semi-structured interviewing, based upon guidelines of questions, has advantages of flexibility which enables the interviewer to “probe beyond the answers”, thus reshaping the interviewer-interviewee interactions as dialogues (May, 2011: 134). It also provides direction for the interview process, to a large extent avoiding the embarrassment of the talk being too discursive as in an un-structured interview.

In choosing the interviewees, I use a selective (purposive) sampling approach, that is, the selection is based upon consistent reflection on the research aims. Explaining selective sampling, Schatzman and Strauss (1973) point out that it is a practical strategy that is “shaped by the time the researcher has available to him, by his framework, by his starting and developing interests, and by any restrictions placed upon his observations by his hosts” (1973: 39). Interviewees of this research include: Qingdao government officials from Shi Bei sub-municipal government, Fuxin street office, and departments involved in urban renewal and regeneration, such as urban planning, land resource, and housing management; residents from No.19 Fushun Road; NSRC ex-/staff; and employees of private companies including a development company and real-estate evaluation company. A total number of forty four people have been interviewed (see **Table 3.3** for an outline of interviews; see **Appendix 1** for more detail information on interviewees).

Table 3.3. Interviews completed

Identity/institution	Number of interviews
Government officials	14
Residents from No.19 Fushun Road	16
NSRC ex/staff	9
Employees of private development companies	2
Employees of real estate evaluation companies	3
Total=44	

3.5.4. Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis, as defined by Braun and Clarke (2006), is a method “for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (2006: 83). The data collected during my fieldwork were coded and categorised into themes. In doing this, I followed guidelines provided by Braun and Clarke (2006), engaging in six steps including familiarizing with data, generating the initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing and refining themes, defining and naming themes to showing the results, to producing the report. The whole process of data analysis was interactive and reflexive, in which the constant comparative analysis of similarities and differences of concepts, codes, sub-themes, and themes was conducted to fully understand the meaning of data.

Specifically, I firstly familiarized myself with all the data from participant observation, document analysis and semi-structured interviews by reading/re-reading three times. Since the data were analyzed manually, the verbal data from interviews were transcribed into written form and all the data were printed out to prepare for the further coding work in subsequent steps. Although it was time-consuming, the reading and re-reading work proved to facilitate my understanding of the depth and breadth of the content of the data. As Bird (2005) argues, it is a “key phase of data analysis within interpretative qualitative methodology” (2005: 227).

Driven by the research questions outlined at the start of this chapter, I then moved on to the next step to generate the initial codes for the coding process, as argued by Braun and Clarke (2006).

The codes refer to “the most basic segments, or elements, of the raw data or information that can be assessed in a meaningful way regarding the phenomenon” (Boyatzis, 1996: 63). With the research questions in mind, I undertook substantial coding of the data by identifying and naming the concepts which had close relationships with the research questions. Some small aids were used, such as using colourful pens and post-it notes, and these proved quite helpful.

Following this, the focus of the next step, searching for themes, is to identify the relations among different codes I generated to find the most suitable. It involves “sorting the different codes into potential themes and collating all the relevant coded data extracts within the identified themes” (Braun and Clarke, 2006: 19). A constant comparative method was employed in this stage, in which comparisons concerned with similarities and differences among codes were conducted. Some themes consisting of codes with similar characteristics were present, while some codes seem to belong nowhere, and might be temporary. All the codes should be kept until the end of data analysis.

Moving on to next stage, reviewing the theme, I reviewed and refined all the themes produced by identifying the relations between each other by rereading the collated extracts for each theme. Some themes were kept and some were broken down into different themes or combined into a new theme with others. As Braun and Clarke suggest, “data within themes should cohere together meaningfully, while there should be clear and identifiable distinctions between themes” (2006: 20). Through understanding the relations among themes, I have a clear indication in terms of what the themes are, how they cohere together, and the whole story they tell about the data.

The next step is to define and refine the themes produced, which means “identifying the essence of what each theme is about and determining what aspects of the data each theme captures” (Braun and Clarke, 2006: 21). Under this guideline, I returned to the extracted data for each theme, organised them and tried to describe the scope and content of each theme in a few sentences. During this process, some themes were renamed concisely. Then, the final step, I brought together the results of the thematic analysis to build the story of the data, and combined with the research questions in this study to provide analysis and accounts in subsequent chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7. The

research findings have been discussed with supervisors and have been presented in two academic conferences in 2013 in the US, which to some extent increases the validity of the data for this research.

3.6. Access and power relationships in the field

As Okumus et al. note, “issues related to access vary to a considerable extent with the kind of case being investigated” (2007: 8). For this research, problems concerning accessibility are related to the topic of community regeneration, which is, as I will discuss later, a sensitive issue in China. Also critical to the research and embedded in China is the social and political culture, a hierarchical, bureaucratic, and acquaintance society, where access hinges on the help of gatekeepers.

Gatekeepers, as defined by Okumus et al., are people who can “provide and facilitate access for the researcher” in conducting fieldwork (2007: 10). As Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) suggest, gatekeepers are the initial contacts for the researcher and can help to find other informants to participate in the research. However, gatekeepers also have the power to prevent the researcher’s entry. In addition, according to Lee and Renzetti (1990), powerful gatekeepers can “impose restrictions on researchers in ways that constrain their capacity to produce or report on findings that might threaten the interests of the powerful” (1990: 515). An important gatekeeper for this research is a senior official at the municipal level in Qingdao, with whom I have built personal connections. It is through this person that I have gained access to interviewees in urban planning, land resources, and many governmental departments. A primary way I interacted with this gatekeeper, and other key informants in different government departments he introduced to me, was by attending banquets, an important socialising approach that is deeply embedded in Chinese culture. At these banquets, I developed friendships and built trust with many Qingdao officials. In addition, certain information, that the officials would not normally provide at formal interviews, was gained at these banquets. For example, one official from Shi Bei sub-municipal government said this to me during one dinner, “You have asked me what is my opinion on forced demolition

activities. ... I will now tell you privately as a friend, I think forced demolition is necessary in China, because accelerating development is still the priority in China's society. ... The central state orders the localities to stop using forced demolition, this might be out of good intention, but is not practical because we rely on it to conduct work."

It is also through this gatekeeper that I accessed NSRC staff and residents in No.19 Fushun Road. He made phone calls to officials in Shi Bei sub-municipal government, giving explicit orders, effectively saying "I have a friend who wants to do research with Nan Shan Residents' Committee in your domain, arrange this." A similar process happened when officials in Shi Bei sub-municipal government called officials in Fu Xin street office, and the latter then called the head of NSRC. The whole process functioned in the way of delivering administrative orders through the government hierarchy. This is also revealing in the sense of NSRC's relationships with government authorities: it is treated, actually, by government officials as one level (the lowest) in the government system, and NSRC staff will normally follow government orders.

NSRC's head then introduced me to other staff in the committee, and via these I was introduced to the residents of No.19. NSRC staff helped me to gain access to local residents and to win their trust, but, primarily because of how the staff introduced me, as a researcher sent by the government, some residents were reticent during interviews, because, as one resident explained, "I hope you understand we cannot be totally open to government people because you may report to the officials". I needed to spend time explaining my background before and during interviews, and this would usually reduce the time I had to interview them.

According to Lee (1993), a sensitive topic is a "research topic which potentially poses a substantial threat to those who are or have been involved in it" (1993: 4). As Lee and Renzetti (1990) point out, sensitive topics refer research which explores deviant or illegal activities, or exposes the vested interests of powerful people or those engaged in coercive or domineering behaviours. The aims of this research, including exploring residents' protests against demolition, nail households' experiences and voices, and power relationships between government authorities and RCs and local residents, therefore signify a sensitive topic. In addition, as Lee and Renzetti note, the reason

why a research topic is sensitive lies “less in the topic itself and more in the relationship between that topic and the social context within which the research is conducted” (1990: 513). When I conducted my research in 2012, it was an especially sensitive time for doing research on community regeneration and residents’ protests in China. This was because, as one Qingdao official pointed out, “you choose this time to do your research is unwise, because the central state has taken strict measures in punishing localities for enacting forced demolition, I think many officials (in Qingdao) will not be honest to you because they are afraid you may be a threat in exposing their behaviours.” Also, as Sieber and Stanley warn (1988), studying a sensitive topic may not only put the researched, but also the researcher, at risk. In China, people are normally not allowed to take photos of the areas targeted for redevelopment, primarily to prevent journalists writing news reports that might be against the developers’ interests. When I took photos at No.19, I was faced with vocal threats from the gangs hired by the developer and my camera was taken and damaged.

In the field, I found myself enwrapped in, and having to deal with, different forms of relationships with different research subjects. Government officials, staff from development companies and real-estate evaluation companies form what are called by Henn et al. (2009), the elites who have professional knowledge and who, as Richard (1999) notes, “hold or have a privileged position in society and are likely to have had more influence on political outcome than general members of the public” (1996: 199). Interviewing these people, as Ostrander (1993) points out, signifies potential risks that the researcher might lose control of the interview, such as direction, scope and pace, while the interviewees begin to drive and determine the research focus. It is necessary, for researchers, to demonstrate their credibility and expertise in the field of research, to show they are well prepared and knowledgeable about the research subject and the interviewees in order to win interviewees’ confidence and respect (Liu, 2015). In addition, as Feldman et al. (2003) argue, identity is an important vehicle for researchers in gaining access and exerting certain control over interviews. I introduced myself to government officials and staff from private companies as a PhD student of King’s College London, and through this, I was perceived as professional and “someone” worth spending time with.

Residents from No.19 however, signify powerless people, as many of them are jobless, poor, and lack a good educational background. I have built relationships of trust and rapport with these people, and showed sympathy to their difficulties in life when doing interviews. Sometimes I offered my help to these people, such as helping one female resident drafting a petition letter to the municipal government, and through these efforts, I developed reciprocal relationships with many residents in No.19. In addition, when interviewing these people, I paid attention to the use of language and avoided jargon. For example, following local residents, I used the term “community demolition and relocation”, instead of “community redevelopment” or “regeneration”, when interviewing them. The reason why residents choose to use this term may be because demolition and relocation are their direct experiences in the urban development process. For Qingdao officials, however, the popular term is “old city remodelling”, and this may show that officials see many inner city neighbourhoods, such as No.19, as “problems” and which need to be remodelled and rebuilt.

Four broad ethical principles are proposed by De Vaus (2001): voluntary participation, informed consent, no harm to participants and confidentiality. Bryman (2008) also offers four ethical principles: whether there is harm to participants; whether there is a lack of informed consent; whether there is an invasion of privacy; and whether deception is involved. For ethical reasons, I sent information sheets and consent forms to participants before interviews, and explained the research aims to them, telling them about their rights to withdraw or stop the interview at any time, and that they could refuse to answer any particular questions. Thirty seven interviews were tape recorded with the participants’ consent, while the remaining seven interviews were recorded by writing notes. Each interview took approximately between one and a half and two hours, and those thirty seven tape-recorded sessions were subsequently transcribed into text documents for further data analysis.

As May (2011) notes, researchers should reflect upon their relationships with, and their positions towards, the research subject. More specifically, researchers should consider how far they should establish an inter-subjective dialogue with participants and adopt empathy towards their experiences, and how far to keep a neutral and objective position. During fieldwork, I tried to

adopt a balance between these two positions: I sought to develop “inter-subjective depth” and “deep mutual understanding” via interactions with participants (Miller and Glassner, 2006: 127), while at the same time I would “try to represent the person’s view fairly and to portray it as consistent with his or her meanings” (Charmaz, 1995: 54).

3.7. Conclusion

According to Bourdieu (1996), social scientists do research in a real world filled with power relationships that they themselves, and their research practices, are part of; and researchers will be confronted with real people who are resistant to objectivation and (re)define research relationships by seeking to “impose their own definition of the situation and turn to their advantage” (1996: 25). In this chapter, I examine how my research is embedded in, and affected by, China’s social and political culture, as well as in what sense, and to what extent, my fieldwork practices are enwrapped in different power relationships. I have also drawn reflections on how these social relationships and powers have affected access, validity of the data and research ethics.

In this chapter, I have discussed a paradigmatic urbanism in urban studies, a structure of knowledge production in urban research, that gives an uneven account of urban experiences and practices in western cities. Against this, Robinson (2008) calls for treating every city as an ordinary city, and through this, breaking hierarchies between different, western and eastern, developed and developing, north and south, rich and poor, central and peripheral, cities. To do this, we should, as Robinson suggests, give every city’s experience an equal chance to be accounted for in urban studies. Responding to this viewpoint, in the following chapter, I will examine Qingdao’s development, planning and social changes in the last century, and through this, engage in an effort, in Robinson’s words, to represent the “unique combinations of social, political, and economic configurations” of an ordinary city (Robinson, 2008: 74).

Chapter 4 From the colonial city to the modern global city: urban planning, social change, and urban transformations in Qingdao

4.1. Introduction

This chapter examines Qingdao's urban planning and development in the last century. It depicts Qingdao's development trajectory and transformation, from a place which used to be a colonial city in the first fifty years from the 1900s, to an industrial city under the socialist regime since the 1950s, and which then experienced market reforms in the 1990s and is now transforming into a tourist city and global financial centre. This chapter describes Qingdao's urbanisation, its transformations through time, in relation to urban landscape, architectural form, lifestyle, political regime, cultural experience, and more.

Responding to Castells (1983), this chapter finds that social conflicts and urban contestations are an integral part of urban development and transformation in Qingdao, where urban contestations have accompanied local development, but taken different forms through different historical periods. There used to be local resistance to cultural prejudice and racial domination in the colonial period; followed by citizens' resentment to public ownership and austerity lifestyles under the socialist regime. Since the early 1990s, the primary conflicts and contestations around Qingdao's urban planning and development appear to resemble those fundamental ones underpinning China's urbanization process in the post-reform period. These are contestations aroused by large-scale demolition, displacement, low compensation levels, and the local state's forced eviction activities, which take the form of protests and resistance by residents against local state development plans. It is for the purpose of pacifying residents' resistance and restoring social stability that Qingdao's local state sponsored a series of policy reforms in 2012 (see following chapters).

The remainder of this chapter is divided into five sections. Section 4.2 introduces Qingdao's urbanization from 1898 to 1914, a period of German colonisation. It examines the resistance that arose against the German colonisers' planning and transformation of Qingdao from an agricultural

society into a European-style, modern port city, as well as the policies and compromises taken in mitigating the conflicts. Section 4.3 focuses on Japanese colonisation from 1914 to 1922, a period when Qingdao was re-planned as a backyard industrial park for Japanese textile factories. It points out that the racial segregation policies, and the design of a special architectural form, the so called workers' prison, signify policing techniques which contributed to pacifying local residents' acute resistance. From 1922, Qingdao experienced almost thirty years of war. It was since 1949, when a new political regime, the People's Republic of China was established, that Qingdao entered another period of rapid development. Section 4.4 looks at Qingdao's development from 1949 to the late 1980s, a period characterised by a socialist regime and strong centralised control. It unpacks the primary urban contestations during this period, including uneven development of urban production and reproduction functions, the overlap of workplace into private life domains, as well as male domination over female, and explores how these were dealt with through a particular architectural design, barrack housing. Lastly, section 4.5 explores Qingdao's market reform, neoliberal transition, and urban development since the early 1990s. In the name of pursuing urban modernization and modernity, Qingdao's municipal government sponsored large-scale demolition projects, which caused serious displacement, and were confronted by residents' protests and resistance activities. The primary urban contestations in Qingdao occurred between the pro-development local state and the displaced residents claiming economic and political rights over accessing higher compensation and staying in the city centre. Section 4.6 concludes the discussions in this chapter.

4.2. Planning a modern port city: The political process and the urban form in the métropole and the outre-mer

Since AD600, during China's Tang Dynasty, Qingdao started to emerge as a military fort on China's sea coast, with an important role in defending the occasional invasions of the Korean and Japanese armies. Alongside a series of wars with Japan, the military forces in Qingdao kept expanding in the following centuries, reaching approximately three thousand soldiers around 1110. It was also at this time that a small-scale township, Ban Qiao Town, emerged on Qingdao's east

coast and became a well-known port and commercial centre in Shandong Province. The commerce and shipping business in Ban Qiao Town developed very fast in the following decades, and by the end of the twelfth century, Ban Qiao had become one of the largest coastal commercial towns and sea ports in the country. Throughout the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the shipping business in Qingdao's Ban Qiao Town kept expanding and the town attracted large numbers of immigrants, including businessmen and coolies, from other places around China as well other Asian countries such as Japan. From the fifteenth to the eighteenth century, Ban Qiao Town's development accelerated, due to the close commercial relationship with other Asian countries such as Japan and India. The town reached its heyday in the nineteenth century, a period ruled by China's Qing Empire. Around the 1880s, Qingdao had become a populated place with 70,000 residents, and Ban Qiao Town was a hub between South and West Asia and China's hinterland, with massive amounts of freight flooding in and out every day. To govern the local population and local businesses, the Qing Empire established Qingdao's first local government in 1892, with a series of responsibilities ranging from policing, justice, conscription and construction (Qingdao Online Archive).

Against the relatively bright scene in Qingdao, the overall tendency around the country in the 1880s and 1890s was serious economic recession, political corruption and instability. The politically and economically weakening Chinese central state was forced by Britain, France, as well as other Western countries, to open up many coastal cities, such as Tianjin, Dalian and Guangzhou, as free ports for these countries to export products. In 1897, the German navy invaded Qingdao and intended to establish a German settlement there. Unable to defend and defeat the German army, China's Qing Empire signed a contract with Germany in 1898, agreeing to lease Qingdao to Germany for one hundred years. It was then that Qingdao entered a period as a German colony.

In 1898 the German Emperor appointed Jaeschke as Qingdao's Satrap, the principal governor of Qingdao. In this year, Jaeschke and the German Emperor, two of the most powerful politicians governing Qingdao's social and political affairs, agreed upon Germany's strategy in this new overseas settlement: to build Qingdao as a first-class colony, which must have a prosperous economy, pleasant environment, and good social and political order. Within this overarching

strategy, they also agreed on the development of Qingdao: it must be built into a first-class colony in a short period of approximately ten years; in the near future, Qingdao should be economically more successful than those more famous and older Asian colonies, including Britain's Hong Kong; also, the German government would give generous financial support to ensure Qingdao's rapid development (Yuan, 1928, from Qingdao Online Archive).

While sponsoring this ambitious plan in Qingdao, Germany was haunted by a series of social and political problems back home. At the end of the nineteenth century, Germany's political and economic powers in Europe were seriously weakened by Britain, Italy, Austria, and other European countries which had built overseas colonies and realised rapid wealth accumulation. Germany's marginalized role in Europe caused a series of domestic political crises, including fragmented national identity, the decline of people's trust and confidence in the government authorities, as well as proletarian social movements against the ruling class (Chen, 2012).

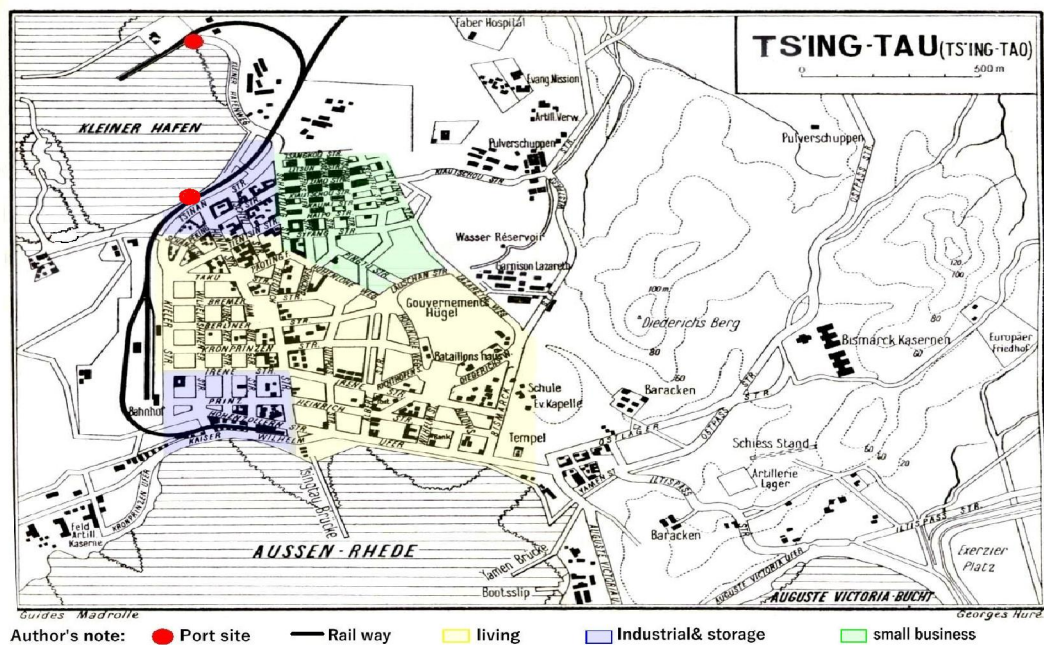
These two seemingly unrelated stories, of Germany's ambitious planning in Qingdao, and the gloomy scenes back in Germany, appear to be highly inter-related and mutually-constitutive, if Wright's (1991) arguments on the linkages between colonial urbanism and the domestic political process is drawn upon. In Wright's studies of French colonies of Morocco, Indochina and Madagascar, she finds that these overseas settlements are laboratories for a series of bold planning schemes and development policies, providing a stage where French politicians, planners and technicians could display their wisdom, professionalism and power, as well as a platform to lever in political support for reforms and changes back home.

Analogous to Wright's findings in the French colonies, the German ambition with Qingdao was beyond simple economic exploitation, but was supported by deeper political and symbolic aspirations. For sure, Germany saw Qingdao as an overseas market and also targeted Qingdao's raw materials such as coal and cotton; but behind the ambitious plan to build Qingdao as a first-class and successful colony, there was also a political agenda to make Qingdao the showcase of German national power. The German politicians believed that to remodel Qingdao, a rural and seriously underdeveloped place, into a prosperous and modern city, which could rival other

European countries' colonies, was essential to regain Germany's international political standing. To Germany, the plan of (re)building and developing Qingdao around 1900 could be seen as similar to the Iraqi war for America in the twenty first century– these nations needed overseas battlefields to transfer people's focus and to relieve domestic political tensions. Success overseas would restore people's political support, trust, and national unity at home.

From 1898, German urban scholars, planners and engineers/technicians started to engage in the planning and development of Qingdao. Their work responded to the German Emperor and Jaeschke's political imagination about building Qingdao as a first-class colony. Qingdao's first urban master plan was drafted by German planners and was published in 1900. The master plan designed a port city in the coastal area of Qingdao. It identified two port sites along Qingdao's coastline, a large Port to the north and small Port to the south. Behind the ports a small-scale city was planned to accommodate 50,000 people. Three functional zones comprised the city: an industrial and storage zone; a small business zone located near the ports; and a residential district located away from the port sites and factories, allowing a quiet and pleasant living environment (see **Figure 4.1**).The master plan started Qingdao's rapid urbanization. From 1900, large-scale land purchase and demolition commenced within the planned urban area. Approximately 2,000 villagers were evicted from the coastal area and were relocated inland in the following three years (Qingdao Online Archive).

Figure 4.1. Qingdao urban planning, 1900



Source: <http://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Qingdao-city-map-1912-in-german-from-madrolles-guide-book-to-northern-china.jpg>

The displacement confronted intense resistance from the local villagers, who were strongly attached to their homes, were hostile to the German colonisers, and, many were reliant on fishing and concerned about losing their livelihood by moving inland. To deal with this, the Germans raised the compensation payments offered to the villagers, built high-quality relocation housing, and promised them job opportunities in the city and port construction projects. In addition, the German planners and officials also brought in some local leaders who enjoyed prestige and authority among the villagers, to persuade people to move inland. The German colonisers' exertion of power in Qingdao was therefore, different to what was usually observed in colonies, less coercive and less confrontational.

The port city design adopted in Qingdao's master plan is, according to King (1989), a paradigm of colonialist urbanization and urban planning in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The reason for the popularity of building colonial port cities at that time was because, as King suggests, the port city design was seen as an effective way to boost rapid economic development and urbanization, through marine shipping, the dominant transportation at the time, thus

incorporating the colonies into the international division of labour (see also Basu, 1979; Dossal, 1989).

Conceiving the port business as Qingdao's pillar industry, the German politicians and planners insisted that a top-ranking modern port must be built at any expense, in order to support the sustainable development of Qingdao's economy. Five hundred million Marks, substantial funding equal to approximately two years of Germany's GDP at the time, was allocated by the German government to support the Qingdao port project. The abundant financial support gave the German engineers/technicians the opportunity to install bold, innovative and expensive designs in Qingdao port. To guarantee safety, the port design was a semi-circular harbour basin to defend against storm waves, a copy of Genoa in north west Italy, a famous model of a modern European port at the time. Also, high-technology facilities, including rail tracks, eclectic cranes, and a large-scale floating shipyard capable of manufacturing 10000-ton freighters, were used in Qingdao port to create massive cargo throughput capacity. German technicians and engineers' work in Qingdao port was applauded by many German politicians, including the German Satrap Jaeschke (Ma, 2009). In his work report to the German government in 1906, Jaeschke praised Qingdao port's vanguard design. As the following quotation suggests, the use of high technology was perceived by Jaeschke as a convincing proof of Germany's strength and power:

"Qingdao port already exceeds any other ports in Asia. In many ports which have a much longer development history, such as Hong Kong, Shanghai, Tianjin, Nagasaki and Kobe, loading the large-tonnage freighters still requires sampans and a lot of manpower. But in Qingdao, we have automatic mechanisms for this task... We have well designed lighthouses, and the ideal shape of coastline which can keep the ships safe from sea storms. To a large extent, we have conquered the influence of weather on the shipping business... In East Asia, there are no better ports than Qingdao." (Jaeschke, 1906, no page)

In contrast with Wright's observation on the French colonies, where the planners were oscillating between conservation and modernization, German planners were clear in erasing Qingdao's traditional landscape and modernizing Qingdao's environment. European urbanism was perceived by the German planners as a natural, unquestionable standard by which to measure modernization. In 1898 the German government published the *Architecture Control Ordinance*,

regulating that the city of Qingdao should comprise only European style architecture and no Chinese-style buildings. The Ordinance also attached importance to architectural aesthetics. The understanding of aesthetics embodied in the Ordinance, included a diversity of design genres within the overall requirement for European-style design, as the Ordinance regulated that no similar architectural design should co-exist on one street. The result of this regulation was, as observed by Chinese researcher Tan, that "*substantive Western architectural and cultural symbols influx to Qingdao at this time, such as Classic Revival, Baroque, Rococo, the Art Nouveau movement, the Column and the Arch*" (2009: 23-4).

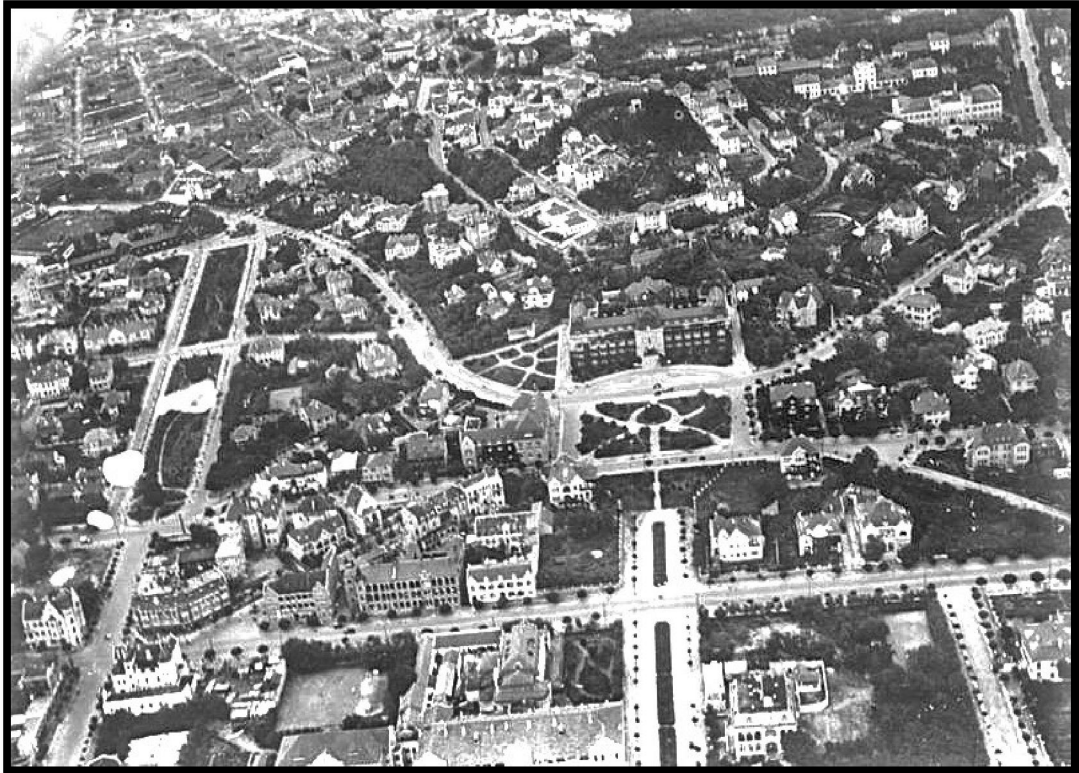
Yet reshaping a city containing only European style architecture meant the large-scale demolition of the original Chinese style buildings, and this galvanised protests by local Chinese people. The most intense resistance occurred when the German authorities decided to demolish a temple more than four hundred years old, which enshrined and worshipped the God of Qingdao's local fishermen. Local protests were conducted in the form of street parades, collective demonstrations, and petitions to the German Satrap's offices. Finally, compromises were made, on both sides. The temple was conserved while all the other local buildings were demolished. The temple became the only Chinese style building remaining in a city filled with European style architecture (Cao, 2003).

Besides architectural regulations, other efforts were made to transplant European urbanism into Qingdao. To enhance urban sanitary standards, German engineers imported facilities invented and widely used in Europe at the time, such as tap water, an underground sewer system, bathhouses, suburban rubbish dumps, and a well equipped abattoir. To create a modern lifestyle, the German government invested in schools, churches, hospitals, post offices and other urban services, and introduced electricity and automobiles to Qingdao.

Qingdao was not only Europeanized but more specifically, Germanized. For the German planners, making Qingdao a European style city was not enough; they were obsessed with planning Qingdao as a place like home, an overseas "heterotopia" which enshrined German social and cultural textures (Foucault and Miskowiec, 1986). Streets in Qingdao were named after German celebrities

and famous cities. A main road located at the very centre of the city was named *Berlin Street*, known today as *Qu Fu Street*, following a medium-sized city in Shandong; another main road at the south waterfront area was named *Emperor William*, known today as *Tai Ping*, to the north of *Emperor William Street* was *Prinz Heinrich Street*, changed to *Guang Xi* after the 1940s. Multiple leisure facilities were established in the city, including the *Marine Club*, with billiards, bars and dancing, which became the primary leisure and socializing location; the *Prinz Heinrich Hotel*, equipped with the first cinema and theatre in Qingdao, was the place where one of the most popular European orchestras, the *German Marine Orchestra*, frequently played. German food and drinks were also produced in Qingdao. The first Café opened on *Kroprinz Street* in 1903, named *Café Flosse*, and was owned by a Swiss businessman. It sold traditional German food and was called the “German Bakery” by local people. In the same year a German businessman *Heinrich* invested in the *Anglo-Nordic Brewhouse* in a marginal area neighbouring the German barracks. Equipped with an up-to-date production line and hiring Germany beer makers, the *Brewhouse* promised to provide “original German beer” to the soldiers and citizens (Yuan, 1928, from Qingdao Online Archive).

Figure 4.2. Airscape of Qingdao in 1912



Source:<http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:%E8%88%AA%E6%8B%8D%E9%9D%92%E5%B2%9B%E4%B8%AD%E5%BF%831912%E5%B9%B4.jpg>

By 1912, the primary construction of Qingdao was complete. Qingdao's urban landscape resembled European cities in many ways, such as an ordered road network, open squares, public parks, as well as the dominant European style architecture (see **Figure 4.2**). The German planners and politicians, including Qingdao's Satrap *Jaeschke*, celebrated their achievements in Qingdao. In his work report to the German government, *Jaeschke* asserted that the German remodelling of Qingdao from primitive farmland into a modern, European style port city was a great accomplishment:

"Qingdao used to be a rural and uncivilised place. The vanguards of our business men, officials and soldiers, had to bear the dilapidated bothies and unpleasing Chinese style buildings. Proper street grids and sanitary facilities were totally absent... Now Qingdao shows a sharp contrast: replacing the villages and Chinese barracks is a well planned, large-scale city, representing a European urban vision... In the urban area we have a well developed street grid for automobile transport, a functional underground urban sewer system, tap water and electricity supplies. There are also Churches and schools that open for both the Europeans and the Chinese... We have made

prominent achievements on this land." (Jiao Ao Development Memo, 1908, no page)

As can be seen from this quotation, behind German celebration of their achievements in Qingdao, there is a covert cultural dichotomy and prejudice, which prioritises the sanitary environment, aesthetic architecture, or more generally, European urbanism, over the non-European and rural lifestyle. This cultural prejudice is at the centre of colonialism and colonial oppression (Wright, 1991; Robinson, 2006; Rabinow, 1989). Qingdao's urban planning and development in the 1900s was not only supported by German political ambition to restore power and realise overseas economic exploitation, but also prescribed by a culturally informed understanding of what a good (urban) environment is. It was the intersection of these social, political and cultural processes that (re)shaped the urban form in Qingdao, at the expense of demolishing local lifestyles, Chinese architecture and cultural traditions.

With German planning, the city of Qingdao achieved success in the way that the German politicians had imagined. Qingdao was a showcase of German's power and a place to accumulate wealth. The city's port business and economy have been prosperous since 1900. In 1901, German Hamburg Ocean Shipping became the first European shipping corporation attracted to headquarter in Qingdao, and was later joined by British, French, Japanese and another four German sea trading enterprises. Under these companies' operations, sea-lanes from Qingdao port soon expanded from Asia to many large European ports, such as Hamburg and Amsterdam. Along with the development of rail transportation and the shipping business, a large number of shops and banks moved to Qingdao from other parts of Shandong Province, including Yan Tai, which was Shandong's biggest port and commercial centre at the time. In a few years Qingdao replaced Yan Tai to be the commercial centre of the Shandong area. In 1907, total exports from Qingdao port exceeded Dalian and Tianjin, which made Qingdao the second largest port in north China. Along with Qingdao's fast development, taxation income from Qingdao expanded approximately twenty times, increasing from 0.36 million Marks in 1899 to 7.28 million Marks in 1913. Tourists, businessmen, coolies engineers and politicians were attracted to Qingdao. The population in Qingdao expanded to 57,578 in 1913, including 1,500 German and another 2,400 Europeans. Qingdao, by this time, had become one of the busiest ports, and one of the most flourishing

commercial centres in Asia (Tan, 2009).

In 1914, the First World War began and in the Asian arena, the Japanese and Britain Alliance defeated the German army and ended Germany's dominion in Qingdao. The Japanese took over Qingdao from German hands in 1914, and Qingdao entered a period as a Japanese colony and began a different development trajectory.

4.3. Governing Chinese workers: divided spaces and policing techniques

Japan's textile industry rapidly developed in the 1870s and soon became the pillar of the country's economy. Alongside the expansion in production, Japanese textiles faced a bottleneck in the early twentieth century, due to a lack of cheap labour, cotton and other raw materials within the country. Japanese politicians and entrepreneurs saw Qingdao as an ideal backyard industrial site to relocate the Japanese textile factories, which was not only geographically close to Japanese territory, but also had a substantial population, large-scale cotton farming and abundant coal mines to support textile production. This political agenda, to make Qingdao the industrial site for Japanese textile factories, provided a prime motivation for Japanese colonisation of Qingdao in 1914, and prescribed Japanese planning and governing strategies there.

In 1914, the Japanese planners drafted the Qingdao Area Master Plan. The suburban area to the north of Qingdao's urban district was planned as a new industrial zone to accommodate the Japanese textile industry. The industrial zone not only provided cheap land for Japanese factories, but also guaranteed easy access to the cotton farms located in the north and the large labour force accommodated in the urban area. The Japanese government invested generously to develop transportation in the industrial zone. In 1916, a road network, as well as rail tracks were developed in the industrial zone. In 1917, the industrial area witnessed the first Japanese textile factory being set up, namely *Qingdao Domestic and Foreign Cotton Mill*. The textile factory was large, taking up 17 acres of land and equipped with 27,000 spindles. Its manufacture, *Silver Moon Cotton Yarn*, soon monopolized the local market and generated substantial profits. In 1918, the

company reinvested in another two workshops, expanding to 90,000 spindles and remained the largest textile manufacturer in Qingdao for the following fifty years. Encouraged by the success of the *Domestic and Foreign*, another eight large scale textile factories settled in Qingdao's suburban area after 1919 and became successful and profitable (Qingdao Island News Archive).

In contrast to the German colonisers who softened the conflicts with local residents and made many compromises during the urban development process, in the period of Japanese rule, the relationship between the colonisers and the local people was highly confrontational. This was partly due to the fact that the two countries, China and Japan, had a history of war and conflict against each other along with a culture of national hostility. In addition, local residents' resentment and resistance activities in Qingdao towards the Japanese colonisers were further intensified because of the policies being pursued – such as the exploitation of Chinese labour by forcing the local farmers to be port coolies on poor salaries, and the revanchist policies which punished the Chinese for misdemeanours such as spitting and stealing. Because of the serious confrontations between Japanese rule and the local people, strengthening the urban police functions became central in Japanese urban planning and governance of Qingdao.

Along with rapid industrial development, the Chinese working population in Qingdao grew fast. A racial segregation policy was established by the Japanese government in 1915, as a new technique for policing the large number of Chinese factory workers. As part of this policy, Qingdao's urban area was divided in two: the old urban district, built by the Germans and with well developed roads and facilities such as a sewer system, was demarcated as the Japanese living zone; on its south east, a shanty town that was established after 1900 was to be the place for Chinese workers.

According to Njoh (2009), racial segregation policies in colonial cities always allocate the physically better places to the colonisers, as a manifestation of their superior position, power and domination over the colonised groups. Besides racial domination and oppression, colonial segregation policy also forms a social control strategy which seeks to impose supervision and police order through divided spaces (Njoh, 2009; Dossal, 1989; Foucault, 1977; Dikec, 2005). More

specifically, racial segregation policy creates (different) homogeneous spaces, and through this intensifies visibility and facilitates state surveillance. In Qingdao's case, what the Japanese colonisers aimed to achieve through enacting a segregation policy was that both the Chinese and the Japanese could be well governed, by separating them and avoiding the chaos of mixing them together. The segregated spaces created in Qingdao enabled the enactment of different policies in governing the two social groups. In the Japanese zone, high sanitary and policing standards were applied: streets were required to remain clean; people were asked to dress properly in public spaces; patrol teams were established to police local security. While the Japanese zone continued to represent the landscape of a modern city, and a place with order, the Chinese zone, in contrast, showed signs of lack of government and disorder, such as a poorly developed road network, insanitary conditions, shanty dwellings, and high crime rates. Chinese writer Wang (1935) described the vision of the Chinese zone as representing the "bitterest urban life",

"(It is) the home of poor factory workers and vendors. ... The overwhelming sight in this place is dilapidated, ... with small groceries, cheerless hucksters, ...modernized visions are so scarce in this place. ... People wandering on the street, they are males with tattered jackets and cloth shoes, females in old fashioned clothing and wearing hair clasps in their blowzy hair. Children without pants fight each other on the street."(Wang, 1935: no page)

Qingdao's segregation policy was also accompanied with techniques to police the segregation order itself. Chinese workers were restricted to the Chinese zone and not allowed to live in the Japanese zone; police patrol teams in the Japanese area would search for individuals resembling Chinese workers, such as those improperly dressed, questioning them and expelling them; night curfews were imposed in the Japanese zone to prevent entry by Chinese workers. These policing techniques rendered the Chinese zone a space of confinement, within which Chinese workers, and others who might endanger the order in the Japanese zone, such as the poor and criminals, as well as insanitary conditions and disease, were locked in.

In 1918, Qingdao's population grew to approximately 80,000, and almost half of them were Chinese workers employed by the Japanese factories. New government techniques were invented, and new spaces were created in Qingdao, in order to govern the substantial Chinese workforce.

New workers' accommodation was built by the Japanese factories in the suburban industrial park. This housing was cramped in small blocks, living conditions were unpleasant, with small cubicles, low ceilings, narrow windows and poorly designed ventilation and lighting systems. Electricity and water supplies were available in prescribed time schedules. Room inspections were frequently conducted, by people sent from the factories, normally in the name of sanitary maintenance and security checks. For their poor living conditions and strict surveillance, the accommodation blocks constructed during this time were termed by Chinese writer Yu as "workers' prisons" (2013, no page). This accommodation displaced Chinese workers from Qingdao's urban area and (re)placed them at close surveillance of the factories (Qingdao Island News Archive).

After 1918, the year the First World War ended, China's central state, in the name of a victorious nation, started to conduct political canvassing in a series of post war international meetings, to close down colonies and settlements in China's coastal areas. Facing mounting political pressure by China, at the Washington Conference held in 1922, Japan agreed to end its dominion in Qingdao. While the Japanese army and police force were evicted from Qingdao, and the segregation policy was abolished, Japanese entrepreneurs still controlled the massive textile factories and retained their influence over Qingdao's economy. However, because of a series of military conflicts among the Chinese warlords after 1922 which caused political instability in Qingdao, many Japanese factories had to shut down and the city's urban development stagnated. In 1938, just before the start of the Second World War, the Japanese army invaded Qingdao and colonized the city for a second time. However, in contrast to the rapid economic expansion and fast urban development that Japan realised during its first period of rule in Qingdao, and although an ambitious development plan was made to revitalize Qingdao's textile industries and upgrade the city's physical environment, implementation was seriously hindered by the local people due to mounting xenophobia and resistance activities during the war. China reclaimed sovereignty over Qingdao in 1945 when the Japanese army was defeated in the Second World War and evicted from Chinese territory. During China's civil war period from 1945 to 1949, Qingdao as well as many other Chinese cities was stagnant in terms of development. It was since 1949, when the civil war ended and the new People's Republic of China was established, that Qingdao finally witnessed another round of rapid development, after almost thirty years of war time, economic recession

and political instability.

4.4. “Urban development serves industrial development”: Socialist urban planning and spatial practice

After the Second World War, the Soviet Union's planning culture, characterised by centralized economic planning and development controls, was transplanted into other socialist countries, such as Cuba, Vietnam and China, where the socialist regime was established in 1949 (Sanyal, 2005; Bray, 2005). In 1953, the first central planning scheme, the First Five-Year National Development Plan, was published by China's central government. The plan announced that the nation's primary mission should be to promote fast industrial development, and envisioned rapid and large-scale industrialization as the way to resuscitate China's economy, realise fast wealth accumulation and restore the country's social and political order. This industrialization centred development strategy was also enshrined in successive National Development Plans that were published by China's central state from 1958 to 1975.

At the local level, Chinese cities strictly followed the central state's diktat and started their own industrialization-centred planning and development. In Qingdao's case, the city saw its primary mission as revitalizing local industries and ambitiously hoped to expand industrial production to be among the top ten cities in the country within ten years. From the 1950s to the 1980s, Qingdao's urban planning and development were designed and recast to support local industrial development. “Urban development services industrial development”, a well-known development slogan in Qingdao at that time, was invented by Qingdao's municipal government around 1950, and epitomized Qingdao's development policies during the following four decades.

In the 1950s, Qingdao's municipal government sponsored a “socialist transformation” movement, the expropriation into public ownership of urban land, enterprise and real-estate from private owners. What was expropriated included, firstly, the massive industries established during the German and Japanese colonial periods, such as the German brew house and the massive Japanese

textile factories; and the large amount of residential housing in Qingdao, including the German designed hotels, coastal villas, and residential buildings (see section 4.3), and the textile workers' dormitories that were constructed by Japanese entrepreneurs during the 1910s and 1920s (see section 4.4). This housing was then allocated by Qingdao municipal government to the workers employed by the local state-owned factories. It was through the "socialist transformation" movement that the initial wealth accumulation process for Qingdao's socialist economy was completed. After the expropriations, Qingdao claimed it had transformed to a socialist city, where private ownership was extinguished, and socialist public ownership had been established. Based upon this transformation, Qingdao's local government authorities declared that in the city's future development, social segregation, deprivation and oppression, which were predominant in the city in previous decades, would be erased.

The ideas and visions of building a socialist city, where certain utopian principles such as pure public ownership and egalitarianism would be enacted, confronted resistance, primarily from the entrepreneurs and private owners whose properties were expropriated by the state. But the expropriation was forcefully conducted, supported by the state machinery including police and military. Feeling powerless to confront the state machine, many private owners tried to resist in different ways, by hiding their properties from the state, or bribing local officials in order to keep their properties, but failed in most cases.

In 1960, Qingdao's first master plan in the post war period was published, and the city entered a phase of planned development. In drafting this plan, Qingdao's local planners were heavily influenced by a Soviet planning expert, Stanishev, who was invited to Qingdao in 1957. The zoning scheme adopted in the master plan was based upon Stanishev's advice that the city should be zoned and the plan should respect and accommodate the city's historical past and existing texture. According to this advice, Qingdao's 1960 master plan demarcated the city into six zones: the old urban area which was built by the German colonisers, and which had plenty of residential housing, a well developed road network and living facilities such as sewer systems, was allocated as residential; to its north, the areas where the original German and Japanese owned factories were located were zoned as Tai Dong Small Industrial Land, and Si Fang Mechanism and Textile District;

and to the north of these, on the urban margin and rural fringe, three new heavy industrial parks were planned, namely Clear Water (Shui Qinggou) Compositive Zone, CangKou Cotton and Rubber Park, and Lou Hill Rear (Lou Shanhou) Heavy Industrial Park. In the 1960 master plan, approximately sixty percent of urban land was planned for industrial land usage, with the hope that the extensive industrial zone would support the city's industrial development and expansion in the future (Qingdao Island News Archive).

Throughout the 1960s and the 1970s, Qingdao's municipal government injected massive funding into the industrial zones and brought about rapid development in these areas. In Tai Dong and Si Fang industrial districts, new production lines and new workshops were added to the old factories, such as the locomotive factory that was established by German entrepreneurs during the 1910s, and the textile factories founded by the Japanese in the 1920s. In the other three industrial parks, many new industries, which were primarily heavy and polluting, such as rubber, print works and iron, were established by Qingdao's municipal government. During the 1960s and the 1970s, Qingdao's industrial zones also witnessed an upgrade in transportation. Many main arteries were constructed during this period, including Si Liu South Road in Si Fang district, which was Qingdao's earliest four-lane road. In the 1980s, Qingdao's industrial zones continued their rapid development, with more factories being established and new roads and residential compounds being completed.

A point worth mentioning is the function of barrack buildings, which formed the dominant architecture in Qingdao from the 1950s to 1980s. Along with Qingdao's industrial development and population explosion, a large number of barrack buildings were constructed around the city as workers' dormitories. These buildings normally had four or five stories, and contained standard single rooms, providing compact living spaces, shared kitchens and toilets (see **Figure 4.3**). While the city of Qingdao claimed to have transformed itself into a socialist city and erased private ownership, class conflict and exploitation, other conflicts and contradictions were still deeply embedded in its socialist urbanism, including those between genders, production and reproduction processes, as well as between domains of private and public life. It is within the barrack housing that these contradictions were concentrated and dealt with.

Figure 4.3. Qingdao's barrack styled housing



Dates: 2012, September

Source: photo taken by the author

Constructed as the factory workers' dormitories, each barrack building normally accommodated the workers from the same factory, and this enabled the factory to impose centralized control upon the residents. Usually, in this barrack housing, strict time schedules were imposed upon workers' daily lives for the purpose of ensuring good performance at work. As one retired textile factory worker recalls at interview, his life in the factory's dormitory in the 1960s was "strictly controlled by the alarms which rang three times a day, ... one in the early morning reminding the housewives to get up and prepare breakfast for the husband, ... one ring later rushes the man to go to work, ... (and) the last one happens at 10.30 pm warning people of black-out time and rushing people to go to bed, ... (these alarms make sure) no one will be late for work and everyone must get a good rest in the night and be energetic the next working day." For the people who lived in barrack housing, the boundaries of the work place and private life were blurred.

Another characteristic of barrack housing was that it guaranteed no privacy for family life. While each family occupied a single room, the walls were flimsy and the neighbours had to share

kitchens and toilets located in the public corridors. Gossip disseminated rapidly among the neighbours, and as one interviewee commented, "living in the barrack housing means there is no secret about your private life, you fart during the night and the next day every neighbour will know about it and through them the factory will know in the end." The barrack housing in Qingdao resembled the panoptic space where individuals were subject to the factory's surveillance. If the factory detected anything that posed a threat to workers' good performance at work, such as the sick elderly who required workers' time and energy to take care of, or quarrels among couples that could cause demoralization during work time, the factory would try to interfere and solve these troubles, by providing healthcare for the elderly and sending representatives to mediate domestic conflicts. In Qingdao's barrack housing, the state-owned factories played parental, philanthropic and pastoral roles. Besides the familiar arguments that such factories contributed to enhancing workers' well-being and sense of happiness, indeed so, the stories in Qingdao's barrack housing also signify how eager the factories were in reducing the troubles of daily life and creating a productive labour force.

A primary urban crisis in Qingdao at the time was embodied in the underdeveloped urban physical environment, the lack of entertainment for hardworking people, and the poor housing conditions for the working class. To deal with these, the austere urban lifestyle in the barrack housing was beautified and promoted by Qingdao's local state. The lifestyle in the "*Happy Building*", the first barrack housing built in Qingdao, was promoted around the city through local newspapers. The shared usage of kitchens and toilets, though inconvenient, was promoted as nurturing a "family-feeling" among neighbours, and even more, consolidating "brother-and-sister" bonding among the working class through the intimacy of these public spaces. The name of the building was deliberately picked to respond to this discourse- the "*Happy Building*"- signifying the happy life of the workers' families within such housing. The result of this is, as one worker who used to live in this building recalls, was a blind adoration of the lifestyle of barrack housing, "people normally believe living in the barrack housing is a fashion and something that everyone should look forward to".

Barrack housing also formed the sites where male domination was reproduced. In each barrack building, the factories established a neighbourhood self-learning panel, which comprised factory representatives and several active residents. A primary mission of the panel was to educate women to be “docile housewives” to serve their husband, the male worker. According to one mechanical factory worker, the panel in his housing used to reconcile the quarrels between himself and his wife, by criticising his wife’s wrongness in “fighting with husband”, and educating his wife to be “a model housewife... (who can) help husband with his career instead of pulling him down.” Besides being docile wives, the female residents were also expected to play another role as a mother, whose primary responsibility was to give birth and rear children and through this, ensure a substantial labour force for the city’s development. Before population control policy was imposed by the central state in the 1970s, Qingdao’s local state encouraged housewives to accomplish this role and propagandised this as the woman’s primary obligation.

Qingdao’s barrack housing formed “spaces of discipline” (Rabinow, 1989; Foucault, 1975; Home, 1996). It signified the “new socio-spatial arrangements” designed by the socialist state, where “the process of everyday life” of the working class became the focus of the government (Bray, 2005: 85). In these spaces, workers’ lifestyles were remodelled for the purpose of enhancing productivity. Barrack housing, therefore, formed one kind of factory machine—not producing goods, but a new form of urbanism, worker subjectivities, and “the communal body of the working class”(Todorov, 1995: 10).

4.5. Building a modern city: Discourses and techniques for conducting large-scale urban demolition and relocation

In 1978, China’s central state initiated market reform, inducing the privatization of urban housing and land, as well as a political decentralization process through which the autonomous localities were (re)shaped (see chapter 1 for more detailed discussion). Market reform changed and redirected the development trajectories of Chinese cities, in the sense that it led to the resetting of urban agendas by entrepreneurial urban governments and their competition spirit. In Qingdao’s

context, since the late 1980s, the discourse of modernity started to inform the local planning and decision making process. Qingdao's local officials and planning professionals combined in their urgency to engender significant transformation and the rapid modernisation of Qingdao, which were seen as crucial steps in enhancing the city's attractiveness for investment. In the following decades, the meanings of urban modernization and modernity are sought, materialised and contested, through the processes of urban planning and spatial (re)production in Qingdao (Bell, 2008; Lefebvre, 1991; Soja, 2000; Taylor, 2002; Hubbard, 2004; Zhang, 2006).

In 1992, Yu Zhensheng was appointed as Qingdao's new mayor and the city's chief secretary of the party. He proposed a new urban agenda for Qingdao, and that the city needed to adopt modern urban functions. More specifically, Yu wanted to change Qingdao's industrial economy and instead, restructure the city to be a financial centre, a tourist destination, and where a CBD, shopping streets, and high-technology industrial parks were located. Yu claimed that this transformation was essential for Qingdao to capture the development opportunities in the twenty-first century. In other words, Yu believed that Qingdao needed to restructure its urban functions, in order to be more attractive for investment and talent, and to grab the chance of rapid development in an era of globalization and intense global competition. Yu promoted his idea to Qingdao's local officials through a series of government meetings held in 1992 and 1993. Also, during these meetings, oppositional voices, such as those claiming that Qingdao should continue to develop its textile and other traditional industries, were denied and suppressed.

The materialisation of mayor Yu's ambition started with the development of a suburban area, East Zone, located on the eastern side of Qingdao's urban area. In 1992, Qingdao's municipal government published, *The Decision to Accelerate East Zone's Development*. The document announced an ambitious development plan to remodel East Zone, containing approximately 7,783 acres of land, as the city's new business, entertainment, and administrative centre. The document also emphasised that East Zone should undergo elaborate planning and designs, and permitting only headquarter-type functions to locate there, with the hope of assembling world-class companies in East Zone and reshaping the place as a window to show Qingdao's modernization to the outside world.

As the previous section has shown, before the 1980s, Qingdao enacted the socialist regime, building its economy upon public ownership, and the city was hostile to private capital and closed to foreign investment. It was through East Zone's (EZ) development in the 1990s that Qingdao's local government showcased its own changes and modernization agenda, embodied in its pro-development, investment friendly attitude. Qingdao's municipal government announced that EZ welcomed private investors, domestic and overseas, and published a series of priority policies, such as tax reductions and exemptions for large-scale investment over 30 million RMB, and providing cheap or free land for developers. In 1994, Qingdao's municipal government decided to sell its offices in the city centre and move to the newly developed EZ. This was a high-profile step to announce Qingdao's opening up and pro-development agenda. Recounting this point, one municipal official commented at interview that,

"The municipal government funded 0.17 billion by selling the old office buildings, and this money was used to pay for relocating approximately 50,000 residents in the East Zone.... The relocation was also to tell people that the municipal government was determined to develop the East Zone, ... (by) moving to that place and making itself an interested-party in East Zone's development. ...Meanwhile, I think selling the government office also has a politically symbolic meaning. This was to tell people that if the government's building, the symbol of local political power, can be sold, then there's nothing that cannot be privatised, nothing cannot be sacrificed for supporting development. It is an important signal to announce the city's transition from socialism to market economy."

East Zone witnessed rapid development in the following decade. By 1998, Qingdao's EZ attracted 12.3 billion RMB investment and more than one hundred development projects were completed. A modern landscape emerged rapidly, with farmland and farm houses replaced by high-rise office buildings, classic shopping malls, smart restaurants and night clubs. Companies and businesses have flooded in since 1996, including global luxury brands such as Louis Vuitton, Gucci and Bentley Motors. A well-known and prosperous CBD was established in EZ, called Hong Kong Road CBD, where HSBC, Wal-Mart and Hyundai-Motors, and many other top international companies located their branches. Many well designed tourist destinations were also constructed in EZ, including a famous sculpture square, Wusi Square, as well as beaches, and what is claimed to be the world's longest coastal wooden walkway.

EZ's development stimulated Qingdao's local real-estate market. Since the mid 1990s, Qingdao's inner city has witnessed rocketing property prices and becoming increasingly more attractive for investment. This propelled the planning of several rounds of inner city redevelopment schemes, through which the social, economic and physical structures in Qingdao's inner city area, a place accommodating many historical buildings, working class families and poor residents, were significantly remodelled. Qingdao's inner city became the new battlefield of investment, value extraction and accumulation. The first inner city remodelling plan in Qingdao was announced by the municipal government in 1993, through the publication of a governmental document, *Decision to Accelerate the Remodelling of Inner City Slum Housing*. The Decision sought to demolish and rebuild forty parcels of inner city shanty housing by 2000, which involved relocating approximately 46,000 households. Following this, in 2003, Qingdao's municipal government initiated another ambitious inner city development plan, called "*Old and Dilapidated Housing Remodelling Programme*", aiming to demolish, within ten years, the masses of barrack housing that were constructed during the 1950s to the 1970s. However, Qingdao's local authorities released scant official data to show the public how large-scale the demolition and relocation were to be in the city through the 2000s. The reason for the concealment, as a tired planning official in Qingdao pointed out at interview, is due to the fear that the informed public will criticise and resist the development scheme. Nonetheless, we can still gain a picture of how large-scale the second round of demolitions in Qingdao were, from the fragmented data presented in various documents, such as newspapers, government internal meeting records, and government work reports. These accessible data shows us the scale of demolition and displacement at Qingdao's sub-municipal level: from 2003 to 2007, more than 30,000 households in Qingdao Shi Nan district were displaced during the barrack housing remodelling projects; from 2007 to 2012, in Qingdao Shi Bei district, thirty one barrack housing communities were demolished, affecting 35,000 households; from 2008 to 2010, approximately three hundred and fifty five barrack buildings in Si Fang district were demolished and 14,000 households were displaced; and, in Li Cang district, from 2005 to 2008, community development projects displaced nearly 16,000 households.

Qingdao's inner city remodelling plan, in terms of its large-scale character, resembles the inner city slum clearance movement in US cities in the 1950s; as well as the shanty town demolition

schemes in Istanbul, Bombay, and many other developing countries' cities, which were conducted since the 1990s, and caused millions of families to be displaced. In Qingdao as well as other cities, demolitions are preceded by efforts to problematise the targeted places and residents. In other words, it is usually through stigmatising certain places that the government manufactures legitimacy for conducting demolition (Weber, 2002; Ramanathan, 2005; Goffman, 2009). In US cities for example, in the 1950s, the state bulldozer was operated in the name of clearing away urban slums, the so-called problematic places which contained unhygienic and sub-standard living conditions and where the poor and crime were concentrated (Anderson, 1964). In Qingdao's context, since the early 1990s, through local public media, such as Qingdao's local newspapers and TV news programmes, stereotypes about inner city neighbourhoods were produced and propagandised as places that lacked modern living facilities such as sewer and heating systems, and which were dangerous to live in because they lacked proper fire precaution measures. A recent discourse in problematising and stigmatising Qingdao's inner city places is from the new mayor Zhang, who was in office in 2012. In 2013, speaking at an international forum, Bo Ao Forum for Asia, the Mayor declared, to the audience who were politicians and businessmen from Asian as well as European countries, that Qingdao must accelerate remodelling the inner city neighbourhoods to solve a serious urban problem that "200,000 Qingdao residents are still living in poor condition housing that resembles India's urban slums".

Simultaneously, Qingdao's planning professionals rationalised the conduct of large-scale demolition in Qingdao as an imperative for development. According to one senior planning official interviewed from Qingdao's municipal planning bureaucracy, large-scale demolition and physical urban renewal form a necessary phase in city development, and Qingdao must go through this phase before turning towards other development and regeneration approaches. She illustrates this point as,

" We have visited London, Liverpool, Manhattan and many other modern western cities. These places have their own moments of large-scale demolition and physical development. Now they have already finished that phase and have well developed urban physical environments. Instead, these cities are now turning towards comprehensive and culture-led regeneration, such as waterfront regeneration and the remodelling of deserted industrial areas into cultural centres and

tourist destinations.... Qingdao is fifty or sixty years behind those western cities, and it has just entered the phase of large-scale demolition and physical development. ... We must firstly demolish the old and build the new, and then we can probably consider comprehensive regeneration, attending to the social and cultural textures of the city and making Qingdao a better place."

This quotation also implies that Qingdao's local planning professionals see Qingdao as inferior to western cities, in the sense that Qingdao is less modernized and is part of western cities' past. Qingdao's planning professionals engage in activities that "rank and hierarchise cities" (Robinson, 2008: 74), and they position Qingdao in a disadvantaged place. It is based upon this self-positioning that Qingdao's planners rationalise the process of large-scale demolition and physical renewal, as a valuable urban experience and phase that the city must go through as evidenced by western cities.

Qingdao's development and modernization process is accompanied by many contradictions. One of these is the contradiction between modernization enthusiasts and proponents of conservation. In the former group, many of Qingdao's local officials, planning professionals, and architects, seek to build a modernized landscape in Qingdao, and, in their opinions, a prime embodiment of modernity is widespread high-rise building and skyscrapers. Yet building skyscrapers is a value-laden activity, premised upon certain predominant cultural values, economic rationalities and political interests. More specifically, skyscrapers represent American modernity which is what Qingdao wants to transplant to its own land; and, as Castells (1983) points out, skyscrapers not only function as the headquarters of, and places which, "concentrate the paperwork of giant corporations", or simply form "major real estate investments in a space that has become a commodity in itself", but also "symbolize the power of money over the city through technology and self-confidence and are the cathedrals of the period of rising corporate capitalism" (Castells, 1983: 303; see also, King, 2004). On the other side, many of Qingdao's local architects and scholars wish to conserve Qingdao's traditional landscape and historical buildings, especially those constructed by German colonisers in the 1910s, which are seen as aesthetic and valuable architectural heritage.

Eventually, it was the former group, who enthusiastically pursued modernisation, that have shaped Qingdao's development agenda. Since the early 1990s, high-rise residential and office buildings have been erected, replacing the old, low-rise buildings in Qingdao. East Zone has assembled a large number of skyscrapers, including China Rail Road Qingdao Centre, at 237 meters, the second highest building in Asia. During Qingdao's large-scale demolition and reconstruction process in the past two decades, what has been erased is not only the old neighbourhoods and traditional landscape, but also the social networks and lifestyles that were contained in the demolished residential buildings, such as the working-class communal life in the barrack housing (see section 4.5). Qingdao's development and modernization, therefore, informs how, in an era of globalization, global capital functions as a neo-colonial power which flattens local traditions and diverse cultures through a global urbanization process (Leisch, 2002; Harvey, 2005; Robinson, 2006, 2011; He and Wu, 2007; Pow and Kong, 2007; Liang, 2008; Arkaraprasertkul, 2009; Pow, 2009; Almatarneh and Mansour, 2013).

Some compromise was made, through the more conservative development of Zhong Shan Road, a place including a large number of European style buildings which were constructed by German colonisers during the 1910s. In 2000, Qingdao's municipal government listed many buildings on Zhong Shan Road as the city's cultural heritage and conservation architecture. But compared to conserving valuable historical architecture, the protection of these buildings is motivated more by commercial reasons. Since 2000, the German buildings on Zhong Shan Road have been refurbished and remodelled as museums, restaurants or clubs, and opened to tourism. Zhong Shan Road has been rebranded as the city's famous "exotic cultural street", providing a different experience, and has become one of the most popular tourist destinations in Qingdao (see **Figure 4.4**).

Figure 4.4. Zhong Shan Road, Qingdao



Dates: 2012, October

Source: photos taken by the author

Besides conservation proponents, Qingdao's modernization has also confronted resistance from ordinary urban residents, who feel dispossessed during the urban development process. Since the early 1990s, Qingdao's municipal government initiated a government guided compensation standard, requiring the developers to compensate the residents by no less than this standard. However, the compensation standard is mismatched with the properties' market prices; or, in other words, it does not reflect the housing's exchange values on the local property market. From 1995 to 2005, over a ten year period that Qingdao witnessed its most rapid increase in property prices, the government guided compensation standard changed little. In 2005, the standard was around 4,000 RMB per square meter. However, Qingdao's property prices in 2005 reached 10,000

RMB per square meter, almost five times more than in 1995. Large scale urban renewal and regenerations has induced resentment in the residents, especially the poor. Catchwords spread among Qingdao's residents, satirising urban development as a process of "government freebooting people" and "more government sponsored demolition, more poor are created". Economic dispossession, displacement and gentrification are at the core of Qingdao's urban contestations.

A large number of residents' protests have occurred in Qingdao since the early 1990s, claiming higher compensation levels and the right to stay in the city centre. Residents' protests are frequent, and, as one official from Qingdao's urban land resource bureaucracy commented at interview, "I never see one single redevelopment project which is without inharmonious voices and people". Many of these protests take the form of blocking actions, which, as I point out in chapter 2, involve residents physically occupying the properties and refusing to move out, with the aim of slowing down the progress of the construction work and through this, forcing the developers to compromise and offer higher compensation. In order to accelerate development, the Qingdao government authorities usually adopt a forced demolition approach, which involves both government-led forced land expropriation, and illegal behaviour such as cutting off the water and electricity supplies, and threatening and harrying of residents by developer-hired thugs. The forced demolition approach has been used in the East Zone development project. In clearing the site for the new municipal government building, Qingdao government used police force, and managed to demolish a factory, a plant nursery, and forcibly relocated approximately thirty households within only twenty five days. Some of these residents tried to present a petition to the central government accusing Qingdao local authorities of illegal and violent behaviour during the process of forced demolition. But they were blocked by Qingdao's officials and police and detained. One of the most well known blocking actions during Qingdao's inner city remodelling projects was by a male resident named Wang Guodong in 2010. Claiming that his property deserved higher compensation according to its market price, Wang refused to move out and took action. Wang published his experiences via his personal blog, including being harried by thugs, verbal exchanges with local officials, and physical clashes with police officers, and he received intense public attention and support.

While forced demolition is the primary reason for exacerbated social conflict and has made urban development a highly confrontational process in Qingdao, many local officials believe using forced demolition is important and necessary in accelerating urban development and is in the public interest. Further illustrating this point, one senior municipal level official pointed out at interview that,

"Accelerating urban development and speeding up the urban modernization process fit with every Qingdao citizen's interests and benefits, ... (by) giving everyone a better physical environment, better living conditions, and a prosperous economy. ...But some individuals just cannot see this, they are obsessed with pursuing their own small economic gains. ... It is the government's responsibility to deal with this, ... (because) in the current phase of development, government still plays the role of leader, decision maker, and supervisor, in short, an omnipotent role that takes responsibility for everything. ...Forced demolition is not glorious, but it is essential to how we do things, ... to overcome individuals' short-sighted and selfish pursuit and to bring about rapid urban development and enhance public interest."

This discourse is typical among Qingdao's officials. It indicates how Qingdao's local officials legitimise using a forced demolition approach during the urban development process. As this quotation shows, this legitimization not only draws upon discourses of urban modernity and its relation to enhanced public interest, but it also draws upon the rationality of "omnipotent government". More specifically, Qingdao's local officials claim that it is the government's responsibility and right to intervene in every domain of society, including accelerating urban development, enhancing the, so-called, public interest, and policing residents who object. In other words, it is based upon a "big government, small society" formula that Qingdao's officials claim in adopting forced demolition as both the government's responsibility and right. But these assumptions about government's role and about civic society, as well as their interrelationship, has changed and been rescaled in Qingdao subsequently. As I will evidence in the following chapters, in a new round of inner city development projects that have commenced since 2012, a forced demolition approach is no longer key to the development agenda. Instead, Qingdao's local government wants to explore new government-society relationships, and to test a new governmentality which signifies a rolling out of the state and self-governing individuals.

4.6. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have examined Qingdao's development and urbanization in the last century, as related to urban planning, contestation, and social change. The chapter shows that Qingdao's urbanization is a process that is accompanied by contestation. In the last section of this chapter, I examined the emergence of residents' protests against large-scale urban demolition, displacement and low compensation levels, since the early 1990s. I also illustrated how Qingdao's local officials have rationalised and legitimized the use of forced demolition approaches in urban development and how these relate to discourses of urban modernity, the public interest, and government responsibilities.

In 2012, Qingdao's municipal government sponsored a new round of ambitious inner city remodelling projects, which involved relocating approximately 50,000 households within five years. It was through these redevelopment projects that Qingdao's local authorities experimented with new government initiatives, characterised by remodelling Residents' Committees (RCs), the community-based, non-government organizations, to be the vanguard in policing residents' oppositional voices and resistance activities. In the following chapters, I will turn to examine local RCs' roles in urban governance and community regeneration projects in Qingdao, with a focus on one particular RC, Nan Shan Road Residents' Committee (NSRC).

Chapter 5 The community trail: Nan Shan Residents' Committee as a vanguard in urban governance and community regeneration

5.1. Introduction

The previous chapter examines Qingdao's urban planning and development in the last century. It shows that Qingdao's urbanization has been accompanied by contestations, which took different forms in different historical periods, prescribed by, and embedded in, the social, economic and political specificities at the time. Since the early 1990s, along with market reform and the predominance of property-led urban development in Qingdao, the city witnessed the emergence of residents' protests and resistance against the government's forced demolition activities, and development policies which offered residents low compensation levels and displaced them from the city centre. Since the early 1990s, pacifying residents' resistance and restoring social stability have been the focus of local government reforms. In 2012, a new trend in policy reform in Qingdao was embodied in local Residents Committees (RCs), community-based, non-governmental organizations, taking a vanguard role in delivering community development projects. In this chapter, I will examine RCs' roles in urban regeneration, and urban governance more generally, by focusing on one particular RC in Qingdao, Nan Shan Road Residents' Committee (NSRC).

NSRC was established by Qingdao's municipal government in 2000, operating in a neighbourhood comprised of approximately 20,000 residents. In the following years, NSRC increasingly took on more government functions, including, for example, neighbourhood security, birth control, and taking care of the elderly, which were devolved by the government authorities, to be implemented at community level. A series of techniques have been applied in governing NSRC, including performance evaluations, salary incentives, competitive funding, and personnel controls, through which Qingdao's government authorities regulate NSRC staff behaviour, and motivate their work. There is much research focusing on China's RCs, seeing these organizations as the basic government units in Chinese cities, where decentralised government functions are carried out, and through which urban populations are incorporated into urban governance systems (see for

example, Mok, 1988; Read, 2000; Bray, 2006, 2008; Sigley, 2006; Shieh and Friedmann, 2008). This chapter adds to these writers' efforts in understanding RCs' roles in urban governance, with a special focus given to RCs' relationships to local government and its restructuring process. Exemplified through NSRC, I argue that RCs signify sites of government beyond the state, whose abilities of governance are cultivated by local government authorities, under the auspices of rolling out and rolling back the state which require RCs to take on more government functions and responsibilities.

In terms of urban renewal and regeneration, policy reforms in Qingdao signify the local state's rolling-out agenda. Qingdao's government authorities see it as RCs' responsibilities to deliver policies in the community, including developing residents' support and consent for community development plans, compensation policies, and relocation schemes. Government's prime task is to cultivate local RCs' abilities in fulfilling these roles. NSRC is the first committee in Qingdao to take on the role of policy delivery, during the development of one residential compound in its neighbourhood, No.19 Fushun Road, in 2012.

The remainder of this chapter is divided into 5 sections. Section 5.2 examines China's community building project, which was sponsored by the Chinese central state in 2000, with the aims of shaping urban residential community as a new space of governance, and cultivating residents' committees' abilities in community governance. Section 5.3 continues to explore RCs' roles in urban governance, by focusing on NSRC in Qingdao, whose government functions and responsibilities have expanded in the past ten years, due local state decentralization. A recent responsibility, devolved to NSRC in 2012, is to participate in community regeneration. Sections 5.4 and 5.5 explore measures and techniques applied by the municipal government, in governing NSRC. These include, as section 5.4 shows, performance evaluation systems and a competitive funding regime, which have been efficient in activating good staff performance at work; and personnel controls, which, as section 5.5 shows, are embodied in Qingdao's government control over the selection of NSRC leaders and recruitment of its staff, so that NSRC becomes a model of professionalism in community governance and urban regeneration. Section 5.6 summarises the arguments and findings in this chapter, in terms of RC roles in urban governance, the restructuring

of state-society relationships in China, and how these are relevant in understanding their recently devolved functions and responsibilities in community development and regeneration.

5.2. The community trail in China

According to Rose (1999), in advanced liberal societies, “community becomes a valorized political zone” (1999: 189); or, in other words, in many western democratic countries, community is rediscovered, (re)invented, and asserted as the means of exerting political actions, and solving social problems and achieving certain government goals. In the UK, for example, various kinds of communities, through political identities, personal interests, or geographical locations, were recognised, visualised, and programmed into various government projects. The discovery of community by the state informs a liberal government technique that is referred to by Rose as “government through community” (1999: 176; see also, Giddens, 1998, 2000; Levitas, 2000; Shaw and Martin, 2000; Amin, 2005; Craig, 2007).

At the core of this “government through community”, is the imagination of community, as a third sector, which lies beyond the public and business sectors, and contains special resources that can be manoeuvred for government purposes. Therefore we witness the emergence of discourses about community, which is said to contribute to enhanced participation and social democracy; strengthening social cohesion; providing opportunities for inclusion; and is efficient in fighting demoralization, which has been haunting modern society, by invoking people’s sense of responsibility and needing their services as volunteers.

Government through community reflects a fundamental (neo)liberal rationality. Drawing upon the community’s (partnership) role in government processes minimises state intervention, as well as reclaiming and reorganising it, in a stage of rolling-out neoliberalism which requires a more aggressive form of regulation in the social domain and a “more formidable and robust pattern of proactive statecraft and pervasive meta regulation” (Peck, 2001: 384). It is through community, a new operational plane, that “governmental interventions have been licensed within the (broadly

defined) neoliberal project" (Peck, 2001: 389). In doing this, community "disguises the continued operation of the coercive functions of the state under a softened rhetoric" (Levitas, 2000, 194); or, as Burchell (1991) comments, a third sector is consolidated in community as "a fertile ground for experimentation in the development of political technologies of government" and governed in the name of the public good (1991: 141). In the UK, state re-regulation and re-intervention in society are embodied in community; where community "became the central collective abstraction for New Labour" (Levitas, 2000: 191), paving a third way "between the state-centred welfarism of 'old Labour' and the radical free-market individualism of Thatcher's Conservatives" (Bray, 2006: 532). New Labour, by resorting to community participation and responsibility, asserts "'etho-political' (Rose, 1999) forms of social governance" (Larner and Craig, 2005: 405) which could provide a solution to the Gordian knotted between two forms of failed regulations and controls, "the authority of the state, (and) the free and amoral exchange of the market and the liberty of the autonomous, right-bearing individual subject" (Rose, 1999: 167; see also, Keil, 2002; Peck and Tickell, 2002; Larner and Craig, 2005).

While many writings address issues of community building, governance and neoliberalization processes, few acknowledge the pertinence of these theoretical discussions beyond advanced liberal societies. In China's context, community is also a key approach of state (re)regulation and restructuring in the post-reform period, and what becomes the plane of government in China is the residential community. In 2000, China's Ministry of Civil Affairs published the governmental document, *Advice on Promoting Urban Community Building in the Country*. It defines community as, "the commune of social life of people assembled within a certain geographical boundary"; and community building as "a process of following Party and government's leadership, relying on community forces and strengths, mobilising community resources, intensifying community functions, solving community problems, coordinating the development of community politics, economy, culture and environment, enhancing community members' living standards and life quality" (2000, no page).

This document also announces the imperative and urgency in building and developing community in China. Community building, as it asserts, is essential for cultivating a new social agency which

could take over the welfare functions that were squeezed from SOEs during the process of market reform. The document further illustrates this point:

"Along with the deepening of reforms in state owned enterprises and the changes of their operation mechanisms, as well as the government institutional reform and government function transformations, the urban community is required to take over the social functions that are peeled off from enterprises, as well as the public services functions transferred out from the government. Urban community is also essential for the building of independent social security systems and social service networks beyond and outside the business and government sectors." (2000: no page)

Indeed, as Read (2000) points out, in the post-reform period, China's urban residential community started to function in the vacuum left by the shrinking welfare state. Also, as the above quotation shows, residential community is recognised as a third sector beyond the public and business sectors, and where, as the document goes on to specify, provides valuable "social capital, ... community resources, ... potential for mobilizing and cultivating active residents in ... enhancing their own civility, ... participating in urban affairs, ... building their own beautiful home" (2000: no page). These conceptualizations about community, as a sphere where political action and government management can be founded upon exploiting special community resources, are analogous to those developed in advanced liberal societies.

In 2009, China's Ministry of Civil Affairs published another document, *Advice on Further Promoting the Work of Building Harmonious Community*. In this document, urban residential community is envisioned as space where "multiple interests converged and various social contradictions congregated"; and therefore it is a place where these problems should be tackled and where "the foundations of urban management and social cohesion should be built upon". According to the document, the problems that Chinese community contains and should deal with include, "social security and governance; the management, surveillance and education of drug addicts, released prisoners, homeless children, underage offspring of sentenced criminals and children of migrant workers", as well as "caring for the elderly, ... educating the young, ... helping the jobless and disabled people" (2009: no page). These discourses imply that in terms of urban governance, China's central state envisioned and sponsored a process of restructuring the relationships between the state and civil society. More specifically, China's central state has started to withdraw

its interventions from the social domain, and transferred many government responsibilities to the community, which is restructured as a partnership in the urban governance process.

The document also points out how “urban problems” should be dealt with through community, by accentuating approaches of participation and voluntary services. It further illustrates this point as, “to build harmonious community, ... (we) should inspire people’s enthusiasm, initiatives, and creativeness in social cohesion and economic development” (2009: no page). Meanwhile, the document encourages voluntary services and the cultivation of a sentiment of “I should help others and the others will help me in return”. Cultivating this new (active) citizenship and (volunteer) urban management mechanism are, as the document points out, essential for fostering social cohesion, people’s sense of belonging, and enhancing social stability. While the functions of community are imagined, designed and articulated along with the specific social problems in Chinese society, these resemble those in advanced liberal societies in several dimensions. At the heart of China’s community building initiatives, there lies what is called by Rose, “a double movement of autonomization and responsabilization” (1999: 174). By underscoring people’s responsibilities in community development and the importance of voluntary services, China’s state resorts to an ethico-politics, which is also at the vanguard of community building initiatives in Western democratic societies.

But what distinguishes China’s community building process from the initiatives in Western countries is, in Bray’s (2006) words, “the degree to which the idea of ‘community’ itself has been institutionalized” through state policies and initiatives (2006: 545). Residents’ Committees (RCs), the community based, non-governmental organizations, play leading roles in China’s urban governance and community building. RCs were established by China’s socialist state in cities during the 1950s. One RC normally comprised seven to seventeen members and operated in a neighbourhood with six hundreds households. The primary job of RCs at that time was policing the people who were not included in the work unit system. In the post reform period, RCs experienced change in terms of staff cuts, and an expanding domain. Now China’s RCs normally have five to seven staff and govern in a larger neighbourhood comprising seven hundred to one thousand four hundred households. RCs have also been endowed with new responsibilities since

the late 1980s, including delivering welfare services in the community, such as distributing pensions to the elderly and disabled and providing training for the jobless; enacting government policies, such as birth control, in neighbourhoods; as well as organizing a series of cultural events in the neighbourhood, such as singing competitions or quiz nights, for the purpose of cultivating people's sense of belonging and enhancing social cohesion. In addition, as stated in the *Advice* published in 2000, RCs are also expected to coordinate with various other organizations in delivering services and governing the community. These organizations include various local governmental departments, ranging from civil affairs, education, to transportations, as well as local enterprises and businesses, and various NGOs, such as the Property Owners' Committee, the grassroots organization that representing property owners' interests, and other voluntary organizations, workers' unions, women's federations, and the union of disabled people. RCs are supposed to draw "social forces and support" from all these organizations, and shape "synergy and cooperation in promoting community building" (2000: no page).

By 2010, there were approximately 80,000 RCs around Chinese cities. RC neighbourhoods, or their domains, have clearly delineated boundaries, which are normally the streets and alleys. It is through RCs that Chinese urban spaces are re-territorialised into "a matrix of contiguous (residential) communities" and China's urban society is remodelled into seamless government units (Bray, 2008: 398). In the following section, by focusing on one particular RC, Nan Shan Road Residents' Community in Qingdao, I will further examine RCs and their roles in community building and urban governance. I will also examine how NSRC moved into the domain of community regeneration and was endowed with new responsibilities of policing residents' oppositional voices and resistance activities.

5.3. Nan Shan Residents' Committee: "Prime minister in the alley" and laboratory of new government initiatives

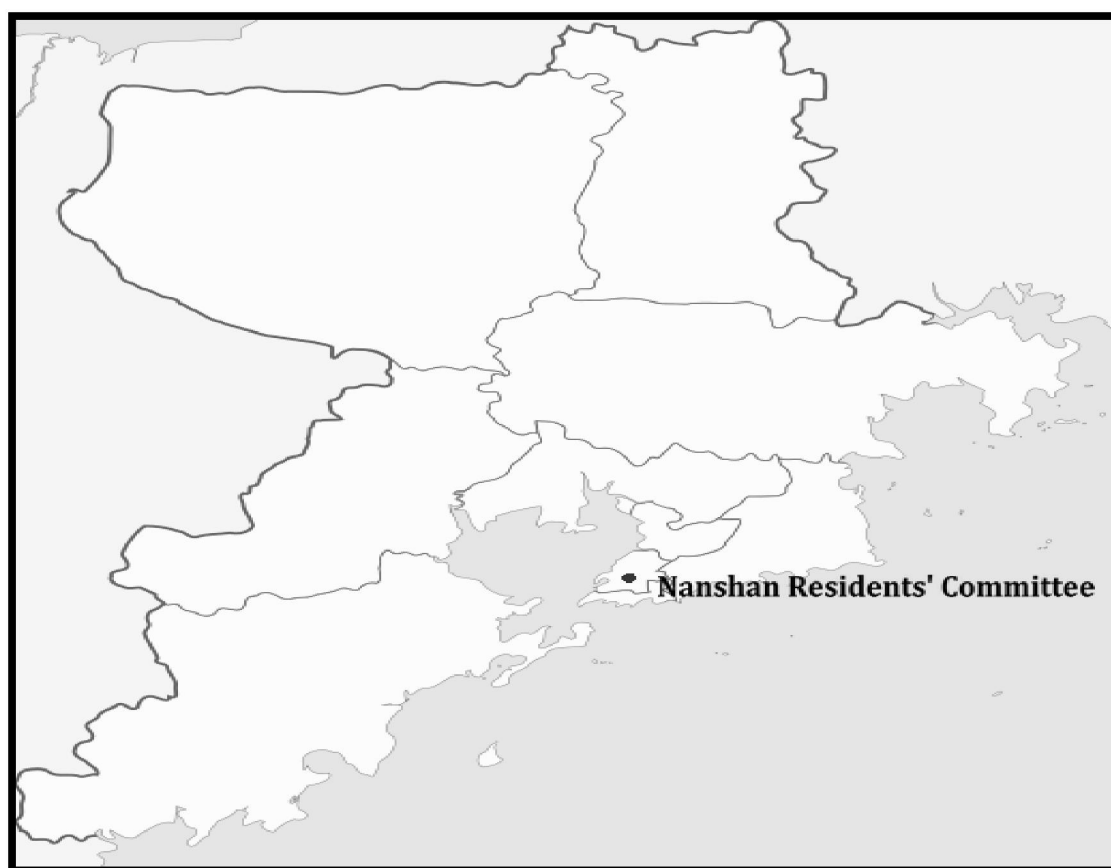
In 2001, China's Ministry of Civil Affairs published the document, *Guidance for Conducting Urban Community Building Demonstrations*. It announced a plan of selecting some RCs around the

country as “demonstration units”, through which bold government initiatives would be explored and experimented around community building and urban governance. In detail, the document points out the expected functions and roles played by these “demonstration units”:

" The demonstration units should insist on liberating thoughts, renewing mindsets, adopting spirits of reform and initiatives, exploring and practising in a bold way. ... (The demonstration units) should enable the transformation of government functions,... further developing community organizations, ... improving community management and services. ... The demonstration units' experience (in community building and governance) should be spread, they should be the model and vanguard who will lead, guide and radiate (other local communities' construction and development)." (2001: no page)

Following this document, the Ministry selected approximately eighty RCs around the country as the “demonstration units”, including Nan Shan Road Community (NSRC) in Qingdao (see **Figure 5.1** and **Figure 5.2**). NSRC had been established by Qingdao's municipal government in 2000, combining four small RCs that were founded by different work units from the 1950s to the 1980s. NSRC is operated by eight staff, including one head, two assistant heads, and another five employees. NSRC's neighbourhood covers 1.3 km² of land, comprising approximately 20,000 residents and fifty properties. The neighbourhood is located in the domain of Fuxin Road Street Office (FRSO), which is governed by a sub-municipal level of government, Qingdao Si Fang district government. Approximately one third of NSRC's residents are workers in a state-owned factory, and many were laid-off in the city's large-scale redundancies in the early 2000s (Nan Shan Residents' Committee online blog). The neighbourhood has also witnessed the influx of substantial numbers of low-income tenants in the last decade. The demographic structure of NSRC, as one staff member commented at interview, is “basically the elderly, low-educated, and low-income workers”.

Figure 5.1. Location of Nanshan Residents' Committee



Source: map by the author

Figure 5.2. Front Gate of Nanshan Residents' Committee



Dates: 2012, September

Source: photo taken by the author

An important reason why NSRC was selected as a national demonstration unit is because of its location in a poor neighbourhood, which made it a laboratory for experimental policies and initiatives in delivering welfare services to the poor. As a laboratory of government initiatives and public policies, NSRC not only has to carry out a series of routine work that any RC in Qingdao has to engage with, but also needs to spend considerable energy and time in designing and testing new ideas and measures about community governance. Next I will illustrate what comprises NSRC's routine work and its role and responsibilities as a government laboratory.

NSRC's routine work comprises two parts. The first involves a series of government and public sector functions that have been devolved. These cover several domains, including, as NSRC's head summarised at interview, "birth control, sanitary, education, local security, conflict mediation, women's rights, welfare services, local development, ... last but not least, political mobilization of party members". Within these domains, the tasks being handed down to NSRC have continued to increase in the past ten years, along with Qingdao government authorities' decentralization reforms. Commenting on this, NSRC's expanding responsibilities in community governance, one NSRC staff member points out that the committee is like "a basket, ...the upper government throws to us everything they are incapable of doing or unwilling to do" (interview). NSRC's head further illustrates this point as,

"While government slim down by handing a lot of jobs to us, I think residents' committees are overburdened. ... For example, in terms of welfare services, we usually only deal with the jobless and the poor, by handing pensions to them each month. But about five years ago the government also requires residents' committees to take care of the disabled people in the community, which used to be the responsibility of the disabled people's federation. ... More ridiculous is that the government wants residents' committees to attract investment to the neighbourhood. This is definitely government's responsibility but not NGOs like us." (interview)

This viewpoint, that NSRC has been overburdened during the decentralization process, and has taken over many responsibilities that should not be undertaken by NGOs, is recognised by other NSRC members. However, the tendency has continued, with increasingly more jobs devolved in the past few years to NSRC, and other Qingdao's RCs, including, for example, fire prevention, and inspecting unlicensed vendors. Besides these decentralised government functions, NSRC also has

to deal with massive paperwork each day, or, as one staff calls it, “being a stamp machine”. This agenda involves the committee in reviewing, scrutinising, and then stamping substantial documents on a daily basis. These documents are mainly related to proving residents’ identities, such as the statement of an individual’s low-income status that is required in applying for government benefits; or drafting letters for proving people’s un-married status that enables people to get marriage certification. It is through this paper work that NSRC is incorporated in, and plays an important role in, administrative procedures. And, NSRC’s head claims that in “proving people’s identities”, the committee acts out the government role of categorising people, based upon its knowledge about the local population. She further illustrates this point as,

“Government’s administrative process is based upon categorising people. ... Government has to identify who are the low-income, the disabled, who are law abiding people and who have a criminal history, and whether one is single or married, so that different policies can be applied to them. ...But the government has to rely on residents’ committees to do the job, because we are familiar with people’s family situation and what is going on in their life.” (interview)

NSRC staff will normally spend a great deal of time stamping documents, and they feel this makes the committee “partly function like a government bureau, engaged in boring, mechanical, and administrative work”. Also, as NSRC’s head claims, taking over a wide range of government functions, the committee plays an important role in local governance, as “every single government policy has to go through the committee in order to be enacted in the community” (interview). It is in these senses, NSRC’s importance, busy workload, and partly bureaucratic characteristics, that NSRC’s staff term the committee like a “Prime Minister in the alley”.

Besides the routine work, NSRC also has to fulfil its laboratory roles. When new ideas about community governance are conceptualised by Qingdao’s municipal government, NSRC will need to put them into practice by designing and enacting new initiatives and measures. For example, in 2007, Qingdao’s municipal government, responding to the central state’s newly agenda of enhancing social cohesion, required NSRC and another four RCs in Qingdao to test new approaches and new measures in increase people’s sense of belonging and friendship among their neighbours. NSRC staff held a large-scale banquet, the “neighbours and friends’ festival party”,

which welcomed every resident living in the neighbourhood and provided a social occasion. The idea of holding a banquet was applauded by the municipal government, was later introduced to other Qingdao's residents' committees and became a widespread, annually held, neighbourhood social event in the city.

As a "demonstration unit" appointed by the Ministry of Civil Affairs, NSRC also has to test the Ministry's ideas about community construction and became a window for the Ministry to observe the results of its experimentation. As mentioned in section 5.3, developing voluntary services is a key agenda in the Ministry's community construction programme, and NSRC has been a vanguard in carrying out this idea. In 2009, NSRC established the first neighbourhood patrol team in Qingdao, enrolling approximately twenty local residents, to police burglary, graffiti and illegal advertisements appearing in the community. In 2010, NSRC opened up a charity canteen, which provided cheap lunches to unaccompanied children and elders in the neighbourhood. The canteen provided approximately ten paid job positions for unemployed residents in the community, and enrolled more than twenty residents as volunteers. Also in this year, four residents who were retired junior high school teachers opened a summer vacation training programme, providing free chess, literature and calligraphy classes to children and young people from the community. These initiatives, designed and enacted by NSRC, were acknowledged and praised by an investigation panel sent by the Ministry of Civil Affairs in 2012, and were later, via the panel who visit many other RCs around the country, introduced to other cities.

In 2012, Qingdao's municipal government faced new challenges in terms of promoting inner city regeneration projects. On the one hand, the municipal government announced an ambitious inner city remodelling plan, aiming to demolish 1.7 million m² housing and relocating 50,000 households in five years. On the other hand, the municipal government was faced with the central state's ban on using a forced demolition approach in the land clearance process (see chapter 2), and therefore, had to explore new measures to bring about rapid development without using forced demolition, planning profitable and attractive development projects while avoiding acute social conflict. Recounting these points, one senior municipal level official commented that,

"the city's development and the process of enhancing residents' living standards should continue, ... but there are stronger political pressures (from the central state) forcing the localities to adopt new approaches. ... The localities have to follow the central state's will, because it concerns local officials' political rightness and their career future, as well as whether local development can access funding support from the central state, ... (such as) from China's Development Bank." (interview)

As this quotation implies, China's central state has manufactured imperatives for conducting reforms at the local level. The reason for this, besides controlling funding resources, lies in the central state's strict controls over local officials' promotions and the future of their career, which, as I have discussed in chapter 1, are essential approaches to retaining the central state's influence over local development agendas. Faced with political pressures to reform, Qingdao's municipal government cast its gaze towards local RCs.

In 2012, organised by mayor Zhang, Qingdao's municipal government held a series of government meetings, discussing reforms and new initiatives for conducting urban renewal and regeneration projects. The meetings involved officials from street offices, the lowest level of government and which have most contact with RCs; as well as officials from land resources, urban planning, and property management, as the departments that play key roles in planning, decision making and surveillance during the urban development process. At these meetings, consensus was shaped among the officials that RCs should take a more central role during urban renewal projects. More specifically, RCs should fulfil a double mission in community redevelopment projects, that is, accelerating the speed of development, as well as reducing the chances of the emergence of residents' oppositional voices and resistance activities. According to one street official who participated in these meetings, Qingdao's officials believe RCs are capable of doing all this because,

"People are familiar with their residents' committees and know about the staff, so they trust the committees members and this gives the committee huge advantages in propagandising policies. ... Residents' committees are familiar with local residents and their family situations, so they are good at dealing with the people. ... Committees can mobilize community resources and are good at exploiting local social networks in solving problems. ... In contrast, government departments are not good at these. ... Government should retreat to its own domain, ... (which) it is good at and signifies its real responsibilities, ... planning and decision making. ... Policy enacting and issues of

dealing with residents should be handed to the RCs and be solved within the communities.It is time to change big government thinking." (interview)

This quotation shows that among Qingdao's officials, the thinking on residents' community responds to that announced in a series of central state documents, which, as discussed in section 5.2, see community as a third sector with valuable resources that can be exploited for government purposes. In addition, the above quotation also implies the changing views on government's roles and responsibilities in urban regeneration, no longer as a big government that should cater to both decision making and policy delivery, but only focusing on the former; as well as new conceptualizations of the relationships between government and civil society, embodied in an intention to shape community and RCs partnerships in urban regeneration and the urban governance process.

NSRC, as the laboratory for Qingdao municipal government's new ideas and policies, becomes, once again, the place where this new thinking is experimented and tested. After the decision was made through a series of government meetings, to draw upon the RC as a partner in urban renewal projects, a leadership panel was established, comprising the deputy mayor, and senior officials from urban planning and land resources departments. The panel held several meetings to discuss and design details concerning NSRC's involvement in community redevelopment projects. NSRC was expected to facilitate resident participation, mobilise community activity, and cultivate a sense of responsibility amongst residents. Through this, the panel believed that NSRC could leverage residents' understanding and support for the redevelopment projects, and reduce the chances of resistance. If this could be done, as the officials from the panel claimed, then NSRC would carve out a new approach for conducting urban regeneration in Qingdao, which would be less confrontational, more consensus based, and signify an alternative to the forced demolition approach. In chapter 6 and chapter 7, I will examine the initiatives adopted by NSRC to fulfil these expectations.

In addition, to let NSRC function as a laboratory for this thinking, the panel decided that No. 19 Fushun Road, a residential compound located within NSRC's neighbourhood, would be the first to

be redeveloped in the new round of the inner city remodelling programme that began in 2012. The idea about involving RCs in community regeneration would be tested during No. 19's redevelopment project, through NSRC, and, if proved to be successful, would be applied to other regeneration projects that follow. In the next chapter, I will provide more detail on No. 19 and other reasons for selecting it as the first regeneration project.

A key issue for Qingdao's government authorities is how to make sure NSRC is acting according to government wishes. More specifically, a primary concern is how to mobilize and monitor NSRC staff to play the role exactly as envisaged and expected. This is important, as one street official pointed out at interview, "so that the committee will be a helping hand instead of an issue in itself". In the following two sections, I will examine the measures taken in governing local RCs, exploring how they form intensified and restructured centralised controls, and whether, and in what sense, these measures are effective controls of decentralised government units. I will exemplify this through the case of NSRC.

5.4. "We are government's arm in the community": Centralized control and NSRC's top-down agenda

In the previous sections, I discussed the state project of (re)discovering the third sector as a partner in governance, examining this in Qingdao's context, and exploring its relevance to the emergence of residents' committees in the urban governance process. This state project signifies the adjustment of state-society relationships, and it is also accompanied by the invention of new regulation techniques and the restructuring of the state power regime.

Along with the state's neoliberal project of empowering and responsiblising the community, substantial NGOs emerge, which, along with private sector organizations, take over the devolved functions of government. The role of the state is restructured, no longer as the centre from where to "know, plan, calculate and steer", or "required to answer all society's needs for order, security, health and productivity" (Rose, 1999: 174); but being "the facilitating state, the enabling state or

the state as animators" (Rose, 1999: 174), which could coordinate, from a distance, the operations of a diversity of agents, ranging from "commercial enterprises, trusts, voluntary organisations, primary carers and so on" (Clarke and Newman, 1997: 29). The state is effectively rolling out to the domain of organising and regulating social provision (Jessop, 1994; Desai and Imrie, 1998; Imrie and Raco, 1999). Commenting on the changes in state functions, as well as the relationships between state and civil society this informs, Desai and Imrie argue that local government is being "transformed into local governance structures, characterised by a shift in policy development and implementation from elected agencies and/or institutions of the state, to non-elected, quasi-governmental organisations" (Desai and Imrie, 1998: 638).

Against the decentralization and dispersal of state functions, new government techniques are invented and applied to restore state controls and (re)centralise its powers of coordination. Responding to this point, Clarke and Newman (1997) comment that, "while the state has withdrawn in some ways, its powers and apparatuses have been extended in others – transferring 'responsibilities' but simultaneously creating the capabilities of surveillance and enforcement to ensure that such responsibilities are being fulfilled" (Clarke and Newman, 1997: 29). At the heart of this (re)centralisation process is the emergence of performance evaluation systems and competitive funding regimes, the technologies of New Public Management, which, draws upon organizations' "self-discipline through the internalisation of financial and performance targets", manufactures a regulated autonomy for NGO operations and state supervision (Clarke and Newman, 1997: 29; see also, Hoggett, 1996; Rose, 1999). In Qingdao, performance evaluation and a competitive funding regime also form key strategies for implementing the local state's centralised controls over local RCs.

In 2000, when NSRC was established based upon the merger of four smaller RCs, it also inherited their properties. These included several print shops and restaurants, a low-rise office building, and several residential flats in NSRC's neighbourhood, which generated substantive incomes and enabled NSRC to be financially independent. In 2002, Qingdao's municipal government sponsored reforms to regulate the funding regime of local RCs. NSRC was required to sell its properties, except for several residential flats that brought the committee approximately 24,000 RMB per year,

and which was used for staff bonuses. Public funding became NSRC's primary resource, and was allocated by three governmental departments, including Qingdao Civil Affairs Bureaucracy, Si Fang district government, as well as Fuxin Street Office. The public money covered NSRC's major expenditure, ranging from the salaries of its eight staff, payments on office facilities, and bursaries for holding small-scale social and cultural events in the neighbourhood. In the early 2000s, NSRC and other Qingdao local RCs received a fixed funding allocation, operating in an environment that lacked incentives, resulting in inaction and producing relatively poor performance.

In 2005, to stimulate the activities of local RCs, Qingdao's municipal government implemented performance evaluations, and introduced salary incentives and a competitive funding regime. The evaluation system comprised two parts. The first part aimed to evaluate and monitor RC behaviour in conducting routine work, including, for example, local security, welfare service provision, and enhancing social stability. RCs' behaviour in these domains was evaluated and scored according to detailed criteria. Using NSRC staff descriptions, I have drawn up a table that outlines some of these evaluation criteria (see **Table 5.1**). The second part of the evaluation system contained standards and criteria to evaluate RCs' performance in the flexible and temporary jobs allocated by government authorities. For example, in 2007, the municipal government required local RCs to investigate and report illegal buildings in the community, and one criterion in evaluating RCs' performance was how fast they completed the job. This second evaluation system will change each year, reflecting different temporary missions that the government wants RCs to accomplish. By enacting this two-part evaluation system, Qingdao government authorities not only aim to monitor and enhance RCs' everyday performance, but also want to retain powers to mobilise RCs' involvement in a wide range of contingent and flexible agendas.

Table 5.1. Evaluation criteria for Qingdao's RCs (selected criteria)

Categories	Criteria	Total scores
Welfare services	Community health centre construction Community convenience shop construction Job seeking/training/consultancy centre Housing for disabled people	20
Local security	Community police station construction Community patrol team development Fire prevention seminars	10
Social stability	Policy propaganda seminars Residents' petition management Media relationship management	25

Under the evaluation system, performance is scored against criteria, made comparable through league tables, and rendered open to state surveillance and gaze (Shore and Wright, 2004). Based upon what scores they have achieved, Qingdao's RCs can be compared to each other, and be labelled as good or poor performers. The reward and punishment mechanism for RC performance was enacted in 2006, as salary incentive and a competitive funding regime.

Qingdao's municipal government decided to introduce two parts to RC staff salaries, including basic salary, which is paid monthly as a fixed amount; and incentive payments, which require the committee to exceed certain scores under the evaluation system. The incentive payments take the form of an end of year bonus, the exact value of which is unclear. According to an ex-NSRC staff member the amount equalled one third of his annual income, and was attractive enough for inducing certain activities. While Qingdao's RCs receive a fixed amount of funding from local government authorities, the top ten percent of RCs which have the highest scores will be allocated an extra amount of funding for supporting their activities. This brought Qingdao's RCs into acute inter-organizational competition to achieve high scores. According to NSRC's head, in the past decade, the committee has been achieving high scores under the evaluation system, and because of this, it receives extra funding of approximately 270,000 RMB per year. She believes this to be

evidence that “NSRC is one of the most outstanding residents’ committees in Qingdao, ... (because) it is capable of producing good performance, satisfying the government, ... meeting the criteria, ... and winning substantial funding support for good performance and staff hard work.” (interview)

As this quotation shows, NSRC’s head believes that meeting government’s evaluation criteria and generating good performance under the evaluation system are evidence of the committee’s outstanding status. This viewpoint is reinforced by other NSRC staff, who go further to suggest that a high score under the evaluation system is “the target of each (NSRC) member”, and that “receiving government admiration and (financial) rewards are the committee’s engines of self-improvement” (interview). These reflect, firstly, as in Shore’s (2008) words, NSRC staff “interpolate ...as auditees” who “measure themselves and their personal qualities against the external benchmarks (and) performance indicators” (Shore, 2008: 281). In addition, under the operation of this system, NSRC displaces its accountability away from local residents and towards government. Criticising this, Desai and Imrie (1998) point out that “the purported advantages of the NGOs have been worn away by their focus on procedural targets, increased funding, professionalisation, bureaucracy and the shifting of objectives from social mobilisation towards service delivery” (1998: 639). Recounting this point, and in more esoteric words, an ex-NSRC staff member who is now able to criticise the viewpoint of the committee, points out that in terms of NSRC and other Qingdao RCs, “we are government’s arm in the community, ... following government orders and have very limited self-determination.”

As mentioned earlier, Qingdao’s government authorities wanted to involve RCs in community regeneration and planned to explore this through NSRC in 2012. For this purpose, a new evaluation and scoring system was designed, jointly by the municipal government and Si Fang sub-municipal government, which was applied exclusively to NSRC, in order to mobilise its activities and direct its performance in the regeneration project. The evaluation criteria were designed to ensure that NSRC accomplished a double mission, which, as mentioned earlier, was to facilitate rapid development, while policing residents’ oppositional voices and resistance activities. These criteria, as shown in **Table 5.2**, focus on evaluating the committee’s performance in detecting and suppressing residents’ petitions, and how fast it can vacate the residents from the

buildings.

Table 5.2. Evaluation criteria for NSRC's performance in community redevelopment project

Category	Criteria and scores +	Criteria and scores -
Rapid development	+20 for vacating the buildings within three months +15 for vacating more than seventy percent of residents from the building within three months	-15 for more than half of the residents remaining in the building over three months -10 for causing serious delay in the construction project
Social stability	+20 for non petition activities accrued +15 for recognising and preventing residents' group petitions +10 for recognising and preventing residents' individual petitions +5 for successfully persuading a nail household to move out	-10 for not properly responding to a petition in twenty four hours -5 for the petition activities being delivered to higher government institutions (municipal, provincial and central level) -5 for residents petitions/forced demolition events being exposed by the media

Participating in community regeneration is considered by Qingdao government authorities as, a very important, but temporary agenda allocated to NSRC. The newly designed evaluation system for monitoring NSRC performance in community regeneration signifies another, but somewhat different, control mechanism for regulating the committee's behaviour in temporary and flexible agendas beyond its routine work. The municipal government decided that in 2012, NSRC would be exempt from evaluations of its routine work, but that evaluations would be exclusively based upon its performance in the regeneration project. In other words, as NSRC's head explained, this means that "only if we can generate good performance in the regeneration project, the committee is considered (by the government) as has accomplished its job well". (interview)

NSRC staff feel a lot of pressure from this new arrangement, as they are forced to devote their

efforts into community regeneration, a domain that they are not familiar with. Although they complain, NSRC staff are dedicated and passionate about doing a good job, given the incentive mechanisms. Hearing about the new evaluation system for NSRC, the head held a meeting to inform the staff and encourage them to prepare for the challenge. Recalling her speech during the meetings, the head believes she accentuated the following points,

"I tell them that the committee will need to turn on its full engines, that everyone should do their best and make sure the committee meets government requirements. ... This (regeneration project) is both an opportunity and a risk, either we prove our ability to accept and fulfil the challenges, or we will fail the government's expectations. ... We need to generate good performance, ... achieve high scores to prove ourselves as one of the best committees in Qingdao, ... (by) making sure the demolition and relocation process is very smooth, quick and harmonious." (interview)

As this quotation implies, NSRC's head sees the committee's priority in the community regeneration project is to meet government requirements, receive government approbation, and achieve good performance and high scores under the evaluation system. However, nothing has been mentioned about the committee's responsibilities with the local residents, and this may imply that NSRC is switching its accountability from the local people. This will be evidenced in chapters 6 and 7, which examine the detailed initiatives and activities employed by NSRC in shaping consensus and suppressing oppositional voices during No.19 Fushun Road's regeneration in 2012. As these chapters will show, representing residents' interests and voices is less of a concern to NSRC, and, sometimes, in order to accelerate the progress of the development project, NSRC even resort to measures that actually signify oppression and domination of the local residents.

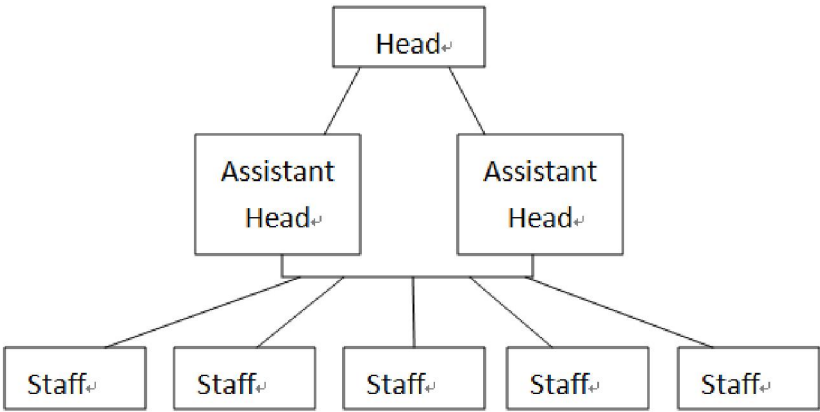
5.5. Personnel management and centralized control in NSRC

Besides performance evaluation and the competitive funding regime, personnel control forms another key approach adopted by Qingdao's local government in regulating RC behaviour. Using NSRC as an example, this section examines how Qingdao's government authorities manage, and intervene in, RCs' personnel arrangements; in what sense, and to what extent, government

management and control of personnel shape NSRC’s professionalism in the domain of urban renewal and regeneration.

As mentioned earlier, NSRC is operated by a panel which comprises eight positions, including the head, who is primary leader of the committee; two assistant heads; and another five members that follow the head and the assistant heads’ orders. The hierarchical structure of NSRC is shown in **Figure 5.3**. According to *Urban Residents’ Committee Organizational Law*, a legal document published by China’s central state in 1989, RC heads and assistant heads should be elected by local residents. Yet, except in a few RCs, such as those under Shanghai Jiading Street Office, which have been experimenting with the democratic election approach, the majority of RCs around the country have their head and assistant heads selected and appointed by local government authorities. In Qingdao’s case, street offices will normally nominate candidates for RCs within their own areas, and the nominations will be submitted to the Civil Affairs Bureaucracy at the municipal level for sanction. After the decision is made, a selection meeting will also be held in the neighbourhood, which normally involves ten to fifty local residents, but which only functions as a “rubber stamp” to legitimise the government’s appointments.

Figure 5.3. Hierarchical structure of NSRC



The power to appoint is reserved by Qingdao’s government as a means of control. Through selecting and appointing local RC heads and assistant heads, government authorities make sure only those with desirable qualities, and who have the potential to produce good performance,

enter RCs and become leaders of these organizations. In 2000, Fuxin Street Office nominated the head of NSRC, who has been in post since then and until 2012. She was appointed as the head because, as one official from the street office claimed at interview, "she is diligent, passionate, ... considerate for residents' difficulties, more importantly, she is efficient in her work and good at enacting government orders". As this quotation implies, compared to other qualities, whether one is willing to follow government orders is a more important standard in selecting the head. This viewpoint is reinforced by another official from the street office, who points out, in a more direct way, "we want someone docile" (interview). These discourses reflect an important, but less overtly expressed, agenda concerning governing local RCs, that is, Qingdao government authorities want to establish strong control over RCs, ensuring these organizations follow government's orders, enacting the government's will, and appointing docile leaders for RCs is seen as a key approach in realising these.

As mentioned earlier, Qingdao's government authorities wanted NSRC to be involved in community regeneration in 2012, and hoped that the committee would play an important role in accelerating development and policing residents' oppositional voices. In this year, Fuxin Street Office nominated a new leadership panel for NSRC to replace the previous one. The new panel were considered by the street office as more capable of fulfilling the above expectations. These candidates have work experience in assisting government officials in community regeneration, such as promoting policies in the neighbourhood, persuading residents to accept their compensation offer, and pacifying angry residents who planned to sponsor petitions and law suits. These elements of work experience were important because, as one official from Fuxin Street Office pointed out at interview,

" They (the new head and assistant heads) are veterans in the domain of demolition and relocation, ...so we can expect they have good performance in the forthcoming development project. ... They can foresee potential dangers for causing conflicts, and have a better judgement(than the officials) in gauging what might be good strategies in pacifying the conflicts. ...They have valuable skills in this domain (which) the officials should respect, ... and should manage to use their skills wisely." (interview)

The new leaders of NSRC are also people who are skilful in communication with residents, and

good at developing personal networks in the community. These qualities, as one municipal level official perceives, are very helpful for NSRC's leaders to build trust and authority among local residents, and develop their own information network in the community. In the forthcoming regeneration project, these, in turn, will enable NSRC's heads and assistant heads to be good mediators for residents' petition activities as those "whose words the residents will buy".

Family life was also brought under government surveillance when selecting NSRC's head. The head, a woman in her mid-fifteens, was deemed to have an ideal family situation for her to take on a committee leadership position. The head has two family members, a son in his mid thirties who has his own successful business, and the husband who has retired, both of whom do not need the head to pay much time to attend to their daily life. Because of this, as one official from Fu Xin Street Office felt at interview, the head could invest all her time and energy in the community job, and, could be expected to "work around the clock" during the community development project. This responds to Maravelia's (2003) argument that increasingly, professional and non-professional domains have been submitted under the gaze of power, through which individuals are further enslaved as being remodelled to fill the expectations of instrumental role-playing.

The remaining five staff members of NSRC are selected by Qingdao's local state through examinations. In 2011, Qingdao's municipal government held an examination to enrol staff for NSRC and several other local RCs. The examination was open to every citizen in Qingdao, and more than one hundred applicants sought positions in NSRC. The examination included two rounds of tests, the first was a written test held by Qingdao Civil Affairs Bureaucracy. This was followed by an interview, at which a board of examiners, consisting of officials from Fuxin Street Office, Shi Bei sub-municipal government, and Qingdao Civil Affairs Bureaucracy, was in charge. Through these examinations five people, who are young and have a university education, were appointed to NSRC. An important reason for selecting these people is because they are considered to have the qualities and skills that the head and assistant heads do not have. Among these an important one is internet skills. In recent years, along with the popularity of the internet and PCs around the country, online blogs, forums and public chat rooms have emerged as primary sites for the residents to disseminate discussion and access information, and therefore deemed as targets

for surveillance and policing. The responsibilities of policing discussion published online is allocated to RCs and, during the community regeneration project, NSRC staff are expected to watch over residents' online discussion, detect the risk of a petition and adopt appropriate strategies, such as locating the residents who publish such a discourse, and persuading them to drop their petition activities.

5.6. Conclusion

This chapter examines NSRC's agenda and functions, showing that along with the local state's slimming down in the last two decades, the committee is decentralised taking on more government functions, and, is required to play a vanguard role in urban renewal and regeneration, in terms of delivering development policy in the community. I also examine a series of techniques adopted by Qingdao's local government authorities in governing NSRC, including performance evaluation, salary incentives, competitive funding, and personnel controls, through which the local state mobilises the NSRC staff enthusiasm at work, redirecting their behaviour, and governing at a distance. I argue that in Qingdao, the local state is turning towards an enabling role, rolling out its agenda towards coordination, instead of direct service provision. By focusing on the Qingdao context, and through the NSRC case, this chapter aims to draw a bigger picture of RCs' roles in urban governance, their relationships with China's local state, as well as an understanding of the restructuring of local state functions and how this process relates to RCs.

I accentuate the efficiency of the government techniques applied in governing NSRC. They have restructured NSRC's relationships with local government. More specifically, it is through these government techniques that the local state has implemented a top-down agenda in NSRC. The committee faces a common problem that also shadows NGOs in advanced liberal societies, that is, the lack of real bottom-up engagement. In urban renewal and regeneration, NSRC carries out agendas and seeks to meet targets that are prescribed by the local government authorities. These are, to assist the government in vacating the community, and policing residents' oppositional voices and resistance to redevelopment. In the following chapters, I will focus on the development

project at No.19 Fushun Road, a residential compound in NSRC's neighbourhood, and examine the roles NSRC has played during No.19's development.

Chapter 6 Community participation at No. 19 Fushun Road: empowerment or government control?

6.1. Introduction

Community involvement and the related rhetoric of empowerment and democratic control have been in vogue in urban policy in advanced liberal societies since the early 1970s. In the Chinese context, these are relatively new policy reform initiatives, addressed by urban policy makers, such as those in Qingdao, only in the last decade. In 2012, No.19 Fushun Road, a residential compound in NSRC's neighbourhood, was included in the city's inner city development plan. The municipal government announced that the(re) development of No.19 was open to resident participation, so signifying, apparently, community involvement in, and democratic control, over the future of the area, and what appeared to be a new approach in delivering community development in the city. However, I argue that in the case of No.19, participation signifies, instead of empowerment of local residents, an instrument to legitimise government policy.

NSRC plays a key role in facilitating this instrumentalised participation process. While claiming to draw in residents' participation, Qingdao's government authorities prescribe the parameters of No.19's redevelopment, including planning, compensation levels, and relocation sites. It is through NSRC that local participation is created as a process to suppress oppositional voices, manufacturing consent, stifling local debate and creating consensus.

As resident participation in urban renewal and regeneration in China is a relatively new policy initiative which has captured scant attention (Shin, 2008), less has been developed about this topic in current literature. This chapter addresses this knowledge gap, by unpacking the procedures and power relationships relating to residents' participation in community redevelopment projects in China's context. I find that the issues that shadow participation in Western countries, including residents' exclusion from agenda setting and the community's powerlessness in controlling its own fate, are also applicable in understanding community participation in the Chinese context. In particular, I argue that in Qingdao, it is through NSRC,

which reinvents participation as a rubber-stamp for government decisions, that local residents' participation signifies an exertion of government control, because, to quote Labonte, "participating ... (in the form of) being organized towards someone else's ideas, was not empowering; it was a system of control" (1999: 432).

The rest of this chapter is divided into five sections. Section 6.2 reviews the literature on community participation in urban regeneration. Section 6.3 examines the decision-making process concerning No.19's development, pointing out that local participation, which is conducted under prescribed agendas and policy parameters, signifies limited community empowerment, and is an instrument for legitimising government policy. Section 6.4 unpacks how consultation, the primary form of resident participation used in No.19, is reinvented by NSRC as a process of suppressing residents' oppositional voices towards off-site relocation schemes. In section 6.5, I explore debates among residents concerning compensation levels and relocation sites, showing that NSRC plays a vanguard role in suppressing these controversies and shaping consensus to show local residents' support and consent. Section 6.6 concludes with the findings of this chapter, and draws out broader issues of community involvement, empowerment, and change of government rationality in China.

6.2. Participation, community and urban governance

In advanced liberal societies, local residents' participation in regeneration projects has a long history and is widely discussed. In the UK, for example, people's participation in urban regeneration has developed particularly since the early 1990s, addressed in flagship programmes such as City Challenge, the Single Regeneration Budget, and, the more recent New Deal for Communities (Peck and Tickell, 1994; Lawless, 1996; Foley and Martin, 2000; Raco, 2000; Ball, 2004). Residents' participation in urban regeneration, and, in urban policy more generally, is assumed, primarily by government authorities, to have many benefits, social, economic and political, such as that it could "tackle paternalism" by empowering communities and shaping a bottom-up policy approach (Mayo, 1997: 8); or it could "promote ownership of regeneration

activity within local communities” and through this, enhance a project’s efficiency and sustainability (Raco, 2000: 596; see also Peck and Tickell, 1994; Jones, 2003; Ball, 2004). With all these assumed benefits of a participation approach, it is welcomed by, and practised in, many localities around the world; and is offered to society as a panacea to a series of social problems. Participation is claimed, by politicians and policy makers alike, to be a sign of political progress and achievement of reform. Indeed, as Jones (2003) comments, resident and community participation in urban governance and urban development “appears to reach its very zenith” in the twenty first century (2003: 581).

However, as Shin (2008) points out, less has been written about residents’ participation in urban renewal and regeneration in China’s context. The primary reason for this is that in China, participation in urban redevelopment projects is a new policy initiative, tested in a few Chinese cities, such as Qingdao, but has not yet captured much research attention. From the late 1980s, when property-led urban development emerged in Chinese cities, planning and decision-making in terms of urban renewal and regeneration were dominated by government authorities and closed to participation by the people affected (Shin, 2008). Analogous to the UK’s urban regeneration in the 1980s, China’s urban development projects implemented a top-down agenda and focused on property renewal, while seldom addressing issues of participation and local democratic control.

Community involvement and residents’ participation in urban regeneration are haunted by the problem that has also confronted democratic politics, that is, whether communities can really be empowered during the process. As Raco (2000) warns, in community regeneration and urban policy, “the issue of political legitimacy”, instead of considerations of empowering residents and communities, signifies “the primary motivation for coopting community groups” (2000: 575). In Qingdao, in a new round of inner city redevelopment planning that started in 2012, a new policy reform initiative includes residents’ participation in the decision-making process. To what extent does political legitimacy also underpin the participation process in Qingdao?

6.3. Redeveloping No. 19 Fushun Road: participation under a prescribed agenda

As Foley and Martin (2000) point out, in urban renewal and regeneration, community signifies a powerless entity which “lacked the resources and the power and influence enjoyed by businesses, local authorities and other public agencies” (2000: 481). Because it is powerless, the local community usually lacks control of its own future, in terms of whether there is a need for redevelopment, when the development happens, and how the local residents should be compensated and where they should be relocated. This was also true for No.19 Fushun Road, a residential compound in NSRC’s neighbourhood, where local residents had been fighting for redevelopment of the community for more than ten years but with minor political effect.

As mentioned in chapter 3, No. 19 consists of two multi-storey buildings which were constructed in 1969, by Qingdao Third Print works, a state-owned factory, as the accommodation for the workers (see **Figure 6.1**). No.19 currently accommodates one hundred and nineteen households, who are ex-/workers and their family members of the print works. Before the late 1980s, No. 19 witnessed its golden years. It was, at the time, one of the highest buildings in the neighbourhood, with a state-of-the-art architectural design, and, in comparison with other housing that was pervasive in the city at the time, provided much better living conditions. No.19’s residents believed that the outstanding building signified the factory’s wealth and power. As one male resident put it,

“Constructing these houses cost one third of the factory’s annual income, which was a large amount of money, only those big size and profitable factories like the Third Print Works could afford. ... Also constructing workers’ dormitories back at the time means you must have strong personal connections with the municipal leaders, so that you can be allocated with a parcel of public owned land. ... The Print Works was good at this.” (interview)

Figure 6.1. No.19 Fushun Road



Dates: 2012, September

Source: photo taken by the author

The first batch of residents moved into No.19 in 1969, as “outstanding” individuals of the Print Works, who beat their colleagues in the competition for allocating accommodation. These included the factory’s leaders, the chief technicians, and the factory’s “model workers” who had a good performance record at work. One resident, who had been living in No.19 since 1969, comments that the residential compound used to be “a first-class residential place for first-class workers” (interview). Also, another resident points out that before market reform, state-owned factory workers were a privileged social class, who enjoyed high income and good welfare benefits such as living in good-quality housing in No.19. Responding to, and further illustrating this viewpoint, one female resident puts it as,

“You have to be a worker of a really wealthy and large state-owned factory to be able to live in a community such as No.19. I mean, you know, the multi-storied buildings are rare resources in Qingdao at the time, and living within one thus really means something. I’ll say, it is a privilege you enjoy for being members of a privileged club, ... not possible for people who are not workers in

large size state owned factories.” (interview)

The fate of No. 19 was overturned in the 1990s alongside market reform. In the early 1990s, Qingdao's municipal government imposed several rounds of market reforms on local state-owned factories, reducing public funding support, and, exposing them to market competition. Many Qingdao factories experienced a financial crisis, and had to go through redundancies, mergers and bankruptcy. From 1992, the Third Print Works started to experience serious financial shortages, and cut down its expenditure on maintaining the housing and facilities at No.19, which, then became physically rundown, with “cracked outer walls”, “leaking roofs” and an “aging electric circuit” which caused frequent power failures. A memorable incident, which was repeatedly cited by local residents as proof of the community's physical deterioration, was the blocked public toilets during the winter of 1994. This caused, as one elderly female recalls, “flooding filthy water”, which was even worse when “iced over on the buildings' corridors and stairs, (which) were dangerous because people would slip and fall down” (interview).

In the 1990s, No.19's neighbourhood experienced rapid development and acquired a more modern landscape. Many new buildings were constructed around the area of No.19, including smart office complexes, classic restaurants and hotels, as well as high-rise residential housing comprising modern flats (see **Figure 6.2**). No.19's buildings, remained in the architectural style of the 1960s, and, in sharp contrast with the new buildings in the neighbourhood, gave local residents a sense that the place was left behind in the city's rapid development and, physically, out of date. One female resident of No. 19 recounts this point as, “the other part of the neighbourhood becoming better since the early 1990s, this made us feel our buildings were dilapidated, too old, and not modern” (interview).

Figure 6.2. Classic restaurant by No.19 Fushun Road



Dates: 2012, October

Source: photo taken by the author

The Third Print Works conducted a redundancy programme in 1998, after which many residents in No.19 became jobless. The factory finally shut down in 2004, and all remaining workers were laid off and were living on municipal government benefits. Although No.19's residents were suffering, however, Qingdao's economy experienced rapid development throughout the 1990s and the 2000s, and the average income level increased rapidly. No. 19 Fushun Road became a place which accommodated the jobless and poor.

From the early 2000s, the desire for redevelopment became pervasive and increasingly stronger among the residents in No.19. This was because No.19's residents, who were poor and could not afford to purchase real-estate, considered redevelopment as their only chance of moving to new housing and a better life. Illustrating this point, one female resident commented that,

"I think community redevelopment is an approach that the government reallocates the wealth that accumulates through economic development, ... (because) redevelopment projects give poor people a chance to move to better housing. ... Many friends of mine have enjoyed new houses because of community redevelopment projects. ... I think we (No. 19's residents) should enjoy this right too." (interview)

This discourse is typical among No.19's residents, who think community redevelopment is their right. Since 2000, the residents have submitted several petitions, signed by every resident in the compound, to the municipal government, demanding that the municipal government draft plans and raise money to support redevelopment of the community. Despite the residents' strong wishes for redevelopment and their petitions, however, little political influence was exerted. While Qingdao's inner city area witnessed large-scaled demolition from the late 1990s, No.19 was excluded from this process, until 2012, when a private developer, Yi Zhong Real Estate (YZRE), decided to invest.

In Qingdao planning officials' opinions, No.19 Fushun Road was difficult to plan for renewal and regeneration. More specifically, as one planning official points out, it is a challenge to plan a profitable and attractive redevelopment for No.19, because the site is on a very small parcel of land, 3,440 m² in total; yet it has a very high residential ratio, accommodating one hundred and nineteen households, which means the cost for compensation and relocation of residents will be high. Besides the problem of profitability, an issue in redeveloping No.19 also lies in how to use the land better. One senior planning official further illustrates this point as,

"You can see how Fushun community is in discordance with the neighbourhood. It is old-style residential housing that is surrounded by much newer constructions built in the 1990s and 2000s. It looks like a wedge that is inserted in the neighbourhood, unfit and problematic...It is very difficult to recycle the land (of No. 19) because it is not easy to re-plan, on this small site, for better land usage to make it coherent with other land functions in the neighbourhood, to make the development (of No. 19) sustainable, that we could, say after thirty years, still see it as a good development plan." (interview)

It is because of these "difficulties with planning", as Qingdao's planning officials claim, that in the past decade, No.19's redevelopment has been long-delayed, despite the strong wishes of local residents. Claiming themselves to have been engaged in planning for No.19's redevelopment and,

finally coming up with a scheme in 2012, Qingdao's planning officials see this new plan as innovative and adopting a long-term perspective. More specifically, the new plan combined No.19's redevelopment as a profitable project, with the construction of an office building in Qingdao's CBD, with high investment returns, as one larger project, to generate profits of approximately 1.1 billion RMB. No.19's redevelopment plan also involved the transformation of land use, from residential to commercial. According to the plan, the residential compound would be demolished, replaced by a five-storey office building, and the residents would be relocated off-site. The plan attracted investment from YZRE in 2012.

By consulting, and negotiating with YZRE, details on compensation levels and relocation schemes for No.19 were settled: relocation of residents would be around the coastal area in Shi Bei urban district where property prices were not expensive, and compensation levels would not exceed 11,000 RMB per square metre. However, later on, Qingdao's municipal government contradicted this in an announcement, on the city's TV news reports, saying that No.19's redevelopment would open up to a process of residents' participation. More specifically, it was said that in No.19, both the relocation scheme, and the compensation levels, which were, as one planning official commented, "residents' greatest concerns", would be open to consultation. Residents' opinions would be fully consulted, and taken into consideration by the government, and, as one planning official claimed at interview, "residents will have a say in the community's development".

Will the input of local residents have an influence on the prescribed agenda for the redevelopment? More specifically, will residents' opinions, on compensation levels and where they would like to be relocated, change the set agenda and policy parameters? This seems unlikely, given the evidence provided by the head of NSRC at interview. According to her, after the announcement about community participation was made, NSRC staff were required to attend a series of meetings and seminars held by the municipal government, during which, not only were detailed plans for No.19 shared, including information about the developer, the government's investment plans, and the future land use of No.19; but also, they were given explicit orders to police opposition arising from the residents. The head further illustrated this point as, "(in these meetings) the government officials tell us we should channel the participation process properly, to

persuade the residents who do not support the off-site relocation plan and are dissatisfied with compensation ... until they fully understand and support the government decisions.” Also, NSRC’s head claimed that she has been called to meet many “big officials”, including the head of Fu Xin Street Office, planning officials, and the deputy mayor, who lectured, persuaded, and dictated to her, to make sure the committee would play its expected role properly. NSRC’s job descriptions and targets were prescribed, so as to suppress oppositional voices which challenged the settled agenda and policy framework.

Drawing upon the rhetoric of empowerment and participation were seen by Qingdao’s local officials as important strategies for conducting reform. Illustrating this point, one Qingdao official pointed out, bluntly, that feeding people with a feeling that their opinions were respected and that they could influence the policy making process, was crucial to produce consent for policies, and reduce the chance of conflict and resistance. He recounted this point as,

“A primary reason why residents are dissatisfied and complain about community development policies is because they feel excluded, ... they want their voices to be respected. ... Therefore we introduce reforms, to provide a channel that local people can voice their opinions and feel they are being heard. ... This is an important strategy for a better governance process.”

Participation in No.19 was therefore, from the outset, denied any chance of bottom-up political influence, but was manufactured as an instrument to draw in people’s support, consent and to enhance the government’s political legitimacy. Indeed, as Foley and Martin (2000) comment, participation is usually passive, embodied in the fact that the extent to which community sectors can exert influence is usually decided by the extent to which the other partners are willing “to cede power and control of resources, decision making and implementation processes to communities” (Foley and Martin, 2000: 486). In No.19, limited powers and controls were intended to be ceded to No.19’s residents. How was such an instrumentalised participation process addressed in No.19 and facilitated by NSRC?

6.4. Issues with consultation

As Ball points out, “there are varying degrees of community involvement” (2004: 124), ranging from the lowest level of consultation to real empowerment of the community, “where community and neighbourhood groups take their own decisions and control resources, for example, through development trusts or community-based housing associations” (Carley et al, 2000, quoted in Ball, 2004: 124). To what extent does consultation signify the empowerment of community, and, how far will the consultation process include or exclude local residents from the decision making process?

In August 2012, NSRC held a consultation meeting in the neighbourhood, inviting every resident of No.19 to attend. At the consultation meeting, more than two thirds of residents proposed that they wanted on-site relocation, because, as one resident recalls, “many people shout out that they do not want to leave this neighbourhood with its central location and that we are familiar with and where we have many memories” (interview). But, instead of responding to these voices, NSRC suppressed them. NSRC told the residents that their only option was to accept the off-site relocation scheme, otherwise the developer would withdraw investment and the government would cancel the development plan. Indeed, as discussed in section 6.3, off-site relocation is a key part of the government’s planning for No. 19, but the claim that refusing off-site relocation would lead to the suspension of the development project is NSRC’s own understanding and (mis)interpretation. Yet this (mis)interpretation proved to work well in pacifying residents’ opposition.

While many residents at first refused to be relocated off-site, after NSRC staff told them this would cause them to lose the opportunity for redevelopment, which No.19’s residents had been seeking for more than ten years (see section 6.3), they decided to submit and accept off-site relocation. One elderly resident commented that disseminating such discourse, “you either agree or lose the opportunity of development”, was a clever strategy adopted by NSRC, and it signified the committee knew about local people and how to deal with them. He further illustrates this point as,

"NSRC has participated in our petitions for development in the last ten years, and it knows how badly we desire community (re)development. ... It knows threatening people that they will lose the development opportunity is the best way to make them give up, ... the committee knows where people's soft rib is and how to hit it." (interview)

Indeed, as this quotation implies, NSRC knows about local people, about their wishes, their past, and, it can even predict their future actions. This "knowledge" about local people, and the ability to control, as I have discussed in chapter 5, is exactly the reason why Qingdao's government authorities want RCs to play a key role in regeneration and especially, in policing residents' oppositional voices. This viewpoint is applauded by the head of NSRC, who, in commenting on the reason why government is devolving the responsibilities for policing community opposition, points out that,

"There are somethings that only the (Residents') Committee are capable of doing, such as pacifying residents' dissatisfaction and persuading them to accept government policies. ... This is because we know our people too well, we know what they care about, and how to let them change their minds. ... Government is incapable of doing this."

After the consultation meeting, many residents tried to seek further information on the government's plan for No.19, and they asked difficult questions on why off-site relocation was the only option for residents. But NSRC staff chose to elude these questions, by telling people that No.19 cannot include on-site relocation due to issues concerning the government's funding balance. Many residents were dissatisfied with this ambiguous response, but, in defending themselves, NSRC staff claimed that they gave this simple answer because residents could not process further information. The head of NSRC made this point as,

"It took a very long time for our staff to study government policies and to finally figure them out. ... We have studied the planning bureaucracy's plan for No.19, and it involves much professional knowledge, such as architectural design, land use planning, and you have to go through a lot of numbers to figure out the government's funding plan for the development project. ... The residents obviously cannot understand these policies, even if you show these to their face." (interview)

As this quotation implies, NSRC's head sees residents as people who lack sufficient knowledge and

ability to understand government policies, and this opinion is widely shared among NSRC staff. The quotation also reveals that the head of NSRC feels that the committee's staff are superior to residents and, perhaps more covertly, indicates discrimination towards them. These attitudes towards residents are problematic when considering the fact that NSRC is a community organization which is supposed to represent residents' voices and to benefit them.

Ten days after the meeting, every resident in No.19 signed a document drafted by NSRC staff, "Agreement to Off-site Relocation Scheme", formally agreeing to the off-site relocation plan. No.19's residents reached a consensus on off-site relocation, but, indeed, as Jones (2003) comments, too much controversy, dissatisfaction, as well as manipulation and control, have been concealed under the superficial consensus. Following the consultation meeting, another well orchestrated participation drama played out at No.19, concerning compensation levels.

In Qingdao, compensation is usually set through negotiations between government authorities and developers, a process which excludes residents' participation. As mentioned earlier, this was also how No.19's compensation levels were settled, and, in order to enhance developer profits, it had already been decided that compensation levels would be lower than 11,000 RMB per square meter. But Qingdao government authorities claimed the opposite –that compensation levels for No.19 would be decided by real-estate evaluation companies (REECs), the private, professional, third party organizations, based upon their evaluation of property market values, without any control and influence from the government and developer. It was also said that No.19's residents would have a say in deciding the compensation levels, because they could decide which evaluation company they wanted to use.

But residents' freedom of choice was constrained to a list which consisted of three evaluation companies, selected by the municipal government, from more than thirty local evaluation companies. On 12th August, 2012, NSRC hung out an information board in the courtyard of No.19, which outlined information about the three evaluation companies, and told the residents they should choose one of these companies to evaluate their properties. But, as one resident complained, the information NSRC disclosed told people too little, "just about the names, year of

establishment, and the company's registered capital, none of these are useful in helping us to make decisions and choice" (interview). This viewpoint is held by many other residents, who claimed they could not make a wise and deliberate choice because of lack of information. Among these people, one man's discourse is typical,

"It is like you can find information on these companies from nowhere, you cannot find their information on Google, and I think the committee knows more (information) but it just does not want to share. ... We want to know useful information like whether the company is receiving government funding support, ... which means the company will not be on the residents' side, ... or information like the evaluation prices the company gave in other communities. ... Without these, we have to make a choice blindly, like gambling." (interview)

No.19's residents believed that the three evaluation companies were in the pocket of the government authorities, and they claimed a primary proof of this was that only these companies were selected by the government from so many local evaluation companies. As one resident put it,

"They must be government puppets, otherwise they will not be chosen by the government. ... This letting people select evaluation companies is just a show directed by the government. In the end, no matter which (evaluation company) wins, the government's puppet wins and the government wins." (interview)

Residents' doubts were not totally unreasonable, and, in fact, their suspicions have been supported by staff from an evaluation company, Qingdao Jian Ke Yuan Real Estate Evaluation Company, which was one of the three on the list. According to one senior manager from the company, in evaluating the property prices, they have to take into consideration both the "market mechanism" and the "government's guidance". She further illustrates this point as,

"In this business, you take jobs directly from the government's hand. Sometimes we will look for jobs from the market, but the real big and profitable projects come from the local government. This means you have to keep close relationships with the government, ... building personal connections with the officials, ... and showing your loyalty by accepting government guidance and following its orders." (interview)

As this quotation implies, Qingdao's local real-estate evaluation companies experience

government intervention and control over their evaluation activities and decisions. There is no reason to expect that in No.19's case there will be an exception. As will be proved later, the evaluation prices for No.19's properties followed the government's prescription; they were around 10,300 RMB per square meter, under 11,000 RMB per square meter, just as the government expected.

Frustrated by the lack of information, and the feeling that their choice would make no real difference to the final decisions, residents were indifferent about participating in the process of selecting evaluation companies. One week after NSRC had published the information on the evaluation companies and invited residents to vote, less than ten percent of households in No.19 submitted their voting tickets to NSRC. However, the government authorities required NSRC to make sure every household in the community submitted their tickets, so that the process of selecting the evaluation company could be said to signify participation and a democratic decision. To fulfil this mission, NSRC staff visited each household in No.19, persuading them to fill in the voting slip. The discourse of "voting is your right and responsibility", was intensively used and exploited by NSRC staff during this process. As one male resident recalls, to make him vote, NSRC staff spoke to him in the following way,

" They tell me I should submit my ticket, and I should help them in persuading my neighbours to submit their tickets as well. ... I tell them people do not want to vote because we feel our votes are useless, will have no influence on the government's decisions. ... But they (NSRC staff) say we must vote because this is our duty ... to play along with the rules, ... to evidence our enthusiasm and not being indifferent. ... So in the end, everyone voted, ... but I bet most of them, just like me, voting involuntarily." (interview)

NSRC therefore played a key role in shaping active citizens, by forcing everyone in the community to participate, and through this, enacting their rights and responsibilities. However, forcing people to participate signifies the violation of another kind of right which, as one female resident points out, is embodied in "showing government our complaints and dissatisfaction by not voting and not participating" (interview). NSRC denied this kind of right, and pacified residents' resistance through "showing indifference". Finally, after another week, every household submitted their ticket. Among the three candidates, Qingdao Jian Ke Yuan Real Estate Evaluation Company gained

the highest number of tickets and became the evaluation company for No.19.

6.5. Participation and consensus shaping: Marginalising oppositional voices

Community, as Colenutt and Cutten (1994) argue, in itself contains diverse and contradictory voices and viewpoints, among different social groups, such as between the rich and poor, residents and local small businesses (see also, Harvey, 1993; Ball, 2004). However, as Raco (2000) warns, the participation process could work towards suppressing controversy and debate and shaping a uniform community voice, through recognising, defining, and excluding, certain voices as “irresponsible”, “irrelevant” and “unworthy”. In the case of No.19, it is through NSRC that such a consensus shaping process was facilitated.

On the 2nd September, 2012, details about the relocation scheme and compensation policies for No.19, in which the residents supposedly participated in the decision-making process, were formally published by Qingdao municipal government. Large, colourful information boards were erected in front of No.19's buildings, showing the policies to local residents (see **Figure 6.3**). The compensation levels for the properties ranged from 10,191 to 10,436 RMB per square meter, varying among properties on different floors. As mentioned earlier, properties in No.19 are small in size, ranging from 15m² to 30 m². Depending on the size of the properties, the compensation offered to the residents would be different, ranging from approximately 200,000 RMB to 400,000 RMB.

Figure 6.3. Information Boards



Dates: 2012, September

Source: photo taken by the author

In principle, residents are responsible for purchasing housing and relocating themselves by using the compensation money. They can either purchase from the market or from the relocation communities provided by the developer, where property prices are much cheaper than the market due to government subsidies. Over eighty percent of residents in No.19 chose to purchase properties in the three relocation communities, including Coastal Garden Community (Hai Wan Hua Yuan), Zhong Ye British County (Zhong Ye Ying Jun), and Coastal Beautiful City (Hai An Jin Cheng), which are all located in the city centre and not very far from No.19 Fushun Road. Property prices in these communities are around 8,900 RMB per square meter, and property sizes range from 70 m² to 120 m². Even to buy the smallest size property in the relocation communities will cost approximately 600,000 RMB. This means those who receive the lowest compensation, of 200,000 RMB, will need to pay at least an extra 400,000 RMB to buy relocation housing; and those who receive the highest level of compensation, 400,000 RMB, will need to spend at least another 200,000 RMB to buy in the relocation communities. Demolition and relocation place a heavy economic burden on No.19's residents. Further illustrating this point, one male resident pointed out that, "200,000 RMB may not be a big thing for other families, but for us who are jobless and

poor, it is our lifetime's saving."

Residents of No.19 residents hold distinct viewpoints on the compensation policies and relocation scheme, which divides them into two camps. On the one side, ninety four households, out of the one hundred and nineteen households in No.19, claim they are willing to be relocated based upon current compensation offers. For these people, the redevelopment is a valuable opportunity for better housing conditions and a better life, which should not be missed no matter what. Recounting this point, one male resident comments,

"For the people who have been expecting the community's redevelopment for a whole decade, when the opportunity finally comes, you should just grab it tightly and never let it go. ... Personally, it is my dream to move to modern residential communities, ... I want to live in modern flats where I can finally have my private toilet and not to share with neighbours." (interview)

For this resident and his neighbours who hold similar views, while the compensation is not high enough to fully cover the costs of purchasing relocation housing, it is good enough, especially when compared to other communities' development projects, which have offered much lower compensation levels than in No.19's case. Further illustrating this point, one female puts it as,

"Five years ago, when Yun Nan Road community was demolished, the local residents only got fifty thousands (RMB) compensation for their flats. ... And two years ago, Liao Ning Road community's development project only offered five thousands RMB per square meter compensate onto the residents. ... Now we are offered more than ten thousand per square meter compensation level, ... I think we should just be satisfied and grateful with what we are offered." (interview)

This discourse is typical among the residents in the first camp, and, it speaks to a broad theory of relative happiness or relative satisfaction. More specifically, as Li (2014) illustrates, in China's context, where development and change are rapid, and disparities among social groups and geographical regions are huge, a primary standard and source of residents' satisfaction and happiness is their superior status in comparison with other social/geographical groups. While some residents in No.19 are happy about the fact that their compensation level is much higher than other communities, this signifies their "relative satisfaction", which conceals, rather than reveals, whether they are really satisfied with the compensation offers.

In addition, many residents say that they are willing to pay extra money to purchase relocation housing, although this means a huge economic burden for them, because, as they claim, it is their responsibility to relocate themselves. Recounting this point, one elderly male resident puts it as,

"The community's (re)development is about enhancing people's living conditions, so residents themselves should share the responsibilities with government, ... you cannot expect the government to do everything. By this I mean, the government have done its part by attracting a developer to invest, and providing cheap relocation housing, it is just right and natural that residents take out their savings and pay for moving to a new community and new housing, isn't it? ... I will say, it is residents' responsibility to pay and to invest in enhancing their housing conditions and living environment."

So far, as we can see from the accounts of the residents who are satisfied with the compensation offers, these people see themselves as practical, who can be satisfied with obviously good compensation levels, and responsible in taking their part in the responsibilities involved in the community's development project. As we will see, these discourses and self-judgement put these people in a convenient position, in attacking those residents in the other camp, who hold opposite opinions. In this latter camp, there are approximately twenty five households, who think the compensation level is too low and the relocation communities are not in good locations. It is worth noting that these are the poorest residents in No.19, including many disadvantaged, such as disabled people, and those who are former prisoners.

Among these twenty five households there is one couple, who claim to be the poorest household in No.19, and they cannot afford the costs induced by the relocation process. They explain this point further in the following way,

" You may not believe that we only have 800 RMB income per month, other No.19 residents normally have 2,000 RMB per month, and Qingdao's average household monthly income is 5,000 RMB. ... So you can see why we cannot afford moving to the relocation communities. ... Our total savings are less than 10,000 RMB, how can we afford 20,000 RMB to purchase the relocation properties? ... In addition, you have to spend a lot of money in decorating the new flats, and I heard that the new communities have very expensive property management fees. ... We cannot even afford to hire a moving company to help us moving the furniture." (interview)

Similar to this couple, other residents also claim they cannot afford to move under the current compensation offers, and, unless the developer offers them more compensation, they will refuse to vacate their properties in No.19 and refuse to move to the relocation communities. In addition, some residents are also dissatisfied about the location of the relocation communities, which, although in the city centre, are not as good as No.19. One man claims that he has “special family circumstances”, which means he cannot leave the neighbourhood of No.19. He further explains in the following words,

" My wife has been seriously sick for over five years. We must live in a neighbourhood which is close to a hospital, in case there is an emergency (with my wife). ... No. 19 is perfect, you can see there is a medium size hospital just around the corner of the street, ... and fifteen minutes of walking there is another hospital, which is one of the biggest hospitals in Qingdao.... Unfortunately the relocation communities have no hospitals in their neighbourhoods, so we just cannot live there." (interview)

This family's situation is not unique, but shared by another three households, who also have sick family members and claim they must live in neighbourhoods which have good medical resources. These households' stories reflect that hospital facilities can be a key factor in deciding people's attachment to a place. But in Qingdao, as well as in other Chinese cities, hospital resources are unevenly distributed around urban spaces, normally lacking in newly developed communities, such as the neighbourhoods of the three relocation communities for No.19's residents. This reflects, perhaps just as one No.19's resident claims, that “the officials and planners seem not to realise or do not care about people's need for a hospital” (interview)

Among the residents who do not want to accept their compensation offer, there is a household who, as the neighbours comment, propose “weird” reasons and requirements. This household comprises one couple in their fifties, and their son, thirty years old, who is recently released from prison. This family claims that the monetary compensation is not what they really want, but, as the mother points out, “a new job opportunity and chance of starting a new life for my son” (interview). She further illustrates this point as,

" We do not really care about the money. ... What my family needs is that the redevelopment project can give my son a new chance for starting his life. ... I hope the government can provide a job opportunity for my son, because, you know, he cannot find a job by himself (as a former prisoner). ... For example, the government can let him open a convenience shop in the new community, or let him be a security guard in the new community. ... Other families want money and new houses from the community's development, but we want job opportunities. Why should we not?" (interview)

In the UK context, community renewal and regeneration policies focused on property in the 1980s, but, since the early 1990s, started to address social problems such as deprivation, joblessness, social and spatial segregation. As the above quotation shows, this family in No.19, see that regeneration of the community should not just be about giving people better housing and higher compensation, but should also provide "opportunities" for the residents, indicating a need for a more socially focused regeneration approach. But this family's requirement is faced with intensive attacks from the neighbours, and is denounced as "nonsense". One male resident criticised it in the following ways,

" Under this market economy you should think along with market principles. ... The community's (re)development is about negotiating compensation, it is market behaviour. ... Where does this weird requirement come from, asking government to solve their son's jobless problem? ... These kinds of problems are not on the agenda (of the community's regeneration), they should not be talked about during the community's (re)development process. ... I say, let us get back to real business, let us talk about money, compensation, and housing." (interview)

As this quotation shows, the man thinks community development should only concern properties and compensation, which, in his opinion are the focus of regeneration under a market economy. This viewpoint and rationale is also held by many other residents in No.19, who insist on the property focus of community development policies, and denounce their neighbours' "job opportunity" requirement as irrelevant.

Besides this particular family, other residents who are not satisfied with the compensation offers and relocation schemes are also criticised by their neighbours. These residents' requirements and expectations about the community's redevelopment, such as that they need higher compensation levels to cover their relocation expenditure, and they need hospital resources in the new

communities, are denounced as unworthy voices. Among such critiques, one female's comments are typical, that those residents who are not satisfied with the compensation offers are greedy, irresponsible, and short sighted,

"The compensation offer is good enough, and those who are not satisfied with it and want more are just too greedy. ... They also insist they have this and that kind of family issues and difficulties, and they want the government to solve these for them during the community's (re)development. ... But solving these (family issues) are their own responsibility, they cannot throw these to government. ... They claim the new (relocation) communities do not have hospitals, schools, big supermarkets, are lacking this and that, but they are too short sighted. I believe five years later those neighbourhoods (of the relocation communities) will be just as well developed as No. 19's. They should not be so short-sighted." (interview)

In No.19, debates between the two camps have become increasingly more acute. NSRC allies itself with residents who support the government's compensation policies, and, join their critiques of the residents on the other side. According to the head of NSRC, the committee will not support those residents who are not satisfied with their compensation offers and who have "other requirements" about the community's development, because these are "selfish requirements" that are unworthy of support. The head further illustrates this point as,

"We acknowledge that there are some inharmonious voices in the community. ... But we know that the majority of the residents support the compensation policies. ... The majority of residents' voices always reflect the true voice of the community. ...Some residents promote selfish requirements, they want the government to give them more than the policies have given to their neighbours. ... Community(re)development is about giving everyone equal compensation, giving them equal opportunity to enhance their housing conditions, but some residents want the (development) project to be an opportunity to harvest personal gains." (interview)

As this quotation shows, NSRC's head claims the reason why the committee do not support some residents' needs is due to the consideration of equality. However, accentuating equality, which, as in the head's opinion, signifies that every resident should receive the same compensation and treatment in there development, could mean inequality for the poor who confront the most serious deprivation. The attitudes of NSRC should also arouse concerns about its accountability, because, as one resident comments, as a community organization which is supposed to care about local people, especially the poor and disadvantaged, the committee seems, "indifferent to

people's suffering and family difficulties" (interview with resident seeking higher compensation).

According to Ball, it is usually through "some process of revelation and representation", such as through selecting representatives who claim to represent the community's voice, that the uniform community view is manufactured (2004: 121). Also as Mayo (1997) warns, the identification and selection of community representatives can be manipulated as a process of bypassing trouble makers, providing "short-cuts to consultation", and, pacifying oppositional voices and shaping consensus (1997: 13). In No.19, it is also through representative selection that oppositional voices are marginalised in the consultation process. One week after the compensation policies and relocation schemes for No.19 were published, the municipal government decided to hold a consultation meeting, to hear local residents' opinions and feedback. The government authorities required NSRC to select twenty representatives from local residents to attend the meeting. As a result of NSRC's selection, the twenty representatives comprised only those residents who were satisfied with the compensation policies and agreed to be relocated under current compensation offers. At the consultation meeting, No.19's representatives shouted out in their own voices: "we support the compensation policies", "we are willing to be relocated under the current compensation offers"; but these were treated as the voice of the community. Those oppositional voices from residents in the other camp were marginalised, and never allowed to become part of the consultation process. After the consultation meeting, Qingdao's government authorities announced that the residents of No.19 supported current compensation policies, and that redevelopment of the community would start immediately.

Manufacturing a uniform community viewpoint through the selection of representatives, and precluding the emergence of oppositional voices through controlled community participation, signifies a consensus shaping process that current urban regeneration programmes and urban policy are inclined to take. This consensual politics, as Mouffe (2005) warns, signifies a dangerous post-political attitude, which denies the antagonistic nature of democratic politics and seeks to suture up the space of proper political debate. This consensus politics underpins the participation process at No.19, stifling local political debate.

6.7. Conclusion

This chapter examines residents' participation in the redevelopment of No.19, with a focus on NSRC's role in the process. It finds that local residents' participation takes the form of consultation, which, according to Ball (2004), signifies the lowest level of community empowerment. Ball advocates that community participation should move from mere consultation to a higher level, including partnership shaping, and, more than this, real empowerment of the community which means they have actual control over resources and agenda setting (see also, Carley et al, 2000; Foley and Martin, 2000). But in Qingdao, as evidenced in the case of No.19, as well as in other Chinese cities, where the local state resorts to community participation as an approach to conducting policy reform, consultation is how participation is addressed (Shin, 2008). The community's powerlessness and its exclusion from agenda setting signify, as this chapter shows, prime issues that face the use of community participation in both the Chinese context and in advanced liberal societies.

This chapter also shows that NSRC plays a key role in the participation process. It deals with local residents' indifference to participation, activating them to vote, to speak their opinions, and to participate in the municipal government's consultation meetings. NSRC also pacifies and marginalises oppositional voices from local residents, by identifying and addressing these voices as unworthy and irrelevant. The result of this, as this chapter shows, is that debates are suppressed and a uniform community voice is generated, to demonstrate local residents' support for compensation levels and the relocation schemes decided by government authorities. In urban renewal and regeneration, Qingdao's local decision-making process is still closed to community voices, and, as I argue, community participation, a high profile agenda of policy reforms in Qingdao, signifies, if anything, only a strategy for providing political legitimacy to government. In responding to Jones (2003), this chapter argues that community participation in Qingdao is "a 'means' for project delivery", rather than "apolitical 'end' or 'right' in itself" (2003: 583); and, following Labonte (1999), I argue that participation is not always a means of empowerment, but could signify an approach of ensuring government control.

Drawing upon the role played by NSRC in the community participation process, this chapter also reflects on issues relating to NSRC's accountability. It shows that the committee, as a community-based NGO, however, is less concerned about representing local residents' interests, and is indifferent to the suffering and difficulties confronted by certain local residents. Instead, NSRC sees its priority is to abide by government officials' orders and accomplish the mission prescribed by the government, that is, to suppress local residents' oppositional voices.

In Qingdao, community participation in the urban regeneration process, given all the above-mentioned issues, however, reflects a changing government rationality. Qingdao's local state sees community participation as an orientation of reform and a source of government political legitimacy, although the extent to which the community is empowered needs to be questioned. The traditional rationality in China, which characterised local development policies and agendas before market reform, and which saw political legitimacy coming from the efficiency of government policies and interventions, dissolves in the face of this new approach. Deep down, the state-society relationship is restructured, characterised by the dissolving of big government, and small society rationality, and is becoming dominated by new government calculations and strategies that (claim to) value empowerment and the autonomy of civil society.

Chapter 7 Social capital and community activists: governing the nail households

"There is 'something' going on 'out there' in people's day-to-day relationships that is an important determinant of the quality of their lives. ... Bouncing somewhere between the economic individualism of the market and the regulatory communitarianism of the state, conditioned and constrained by both, it is the 'gluey stuff' that binds individuals to groups, groups to organizations, citizens to societies. What exactly this 'something' is remains moot, but few doubt that it is palpable. ... It is also the very 'stuff' that community development sets its sights on improving." (Labonte, 1999: 430)

7.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, I have shown that amongst No.19's residents, opinions on levels of compensation and relocation sites divided people into two camps. While the majority of residents agreed to be relocated to the designated communities with compensation decided by the government, there were twenty-five households refusing to accept the offer. They are called 'the nail households' by local residents and NSRC staff and officials. The NSRC mobilised a group of local residents, known as community activists, to persuade the nail households to change their minds and vacate their properties. To understand local residents' persuasion activities and tactics, this chapter draws upon social capital theory. Social capital, according to Field (2003), suggests that the nature and quality of inter-personal relationships, including trust, reciprocity, and sense of obligation, can be cultivated by government as part of a process of governance. In developing this understanding, I argue that the deployment of persuasion activities in No.19 was part of a tactic in which the cultivation of social capital was conceived as a basis for resolving the problem of the nail households. Following Wakefield and Poland (2005), this chapter contributes to an understanding of the sense in which social capital has "been alternately lauded as a way of ... (insinuating a) neoliberalist approach to social relations" (2005:2820). In other words, this chapter notes that the attempt to discipline and shape the attitudes of the nail households by cultivating different attributes of social capital, signifies no less than the responsabilisation of community in self-government.

The experience of the nail households in community redevelopment projects has been given little

attention by academics. This chapter addresses this knowledge gap, by representing and evaluating the experiences and voices of the twenty five nail households in No.19. It depicts the complex and difficult situations that confronted the nail households, and that can be characterised, in part, as the oppression of their views and values, and undermining of their lifestyles and modes of habitation. Insights into the values and lives of the nail households enables the chapter to explore the dark side of social capital, that is, the ways in which the operation of social capital can also lead to negative effects in terms of social injustice, marginalization, exclusion and oppression (Bourdieu, 1986; Edwards and Foley, 1997; Portes and Landholt, 1998; Field, 2003; Wakefield and Poland, 2005)

The remainder of this chapter is divided into five parts. Section 7.2 reviews literature on social capital. Section 7.3 examines inter-personal relationships among No.19's residents, as well as between NSRC and local people, which signify the pre-existing social capital of the place. Section 7.4 examines Qingdao officials' discourses on governing nail households, exploring in what sense social capital, individual responsibility and community self-government, are inter-related concepts and rationalities held by Qingdao officials. Section 7.5 examines community activists' persuasion activities against nail households in No.19, and discusses how we should understand the oppression confronting the latter. Section 7.6 concludes with the findings and discusses the relationships between social capital and the governance process.

7.2. Social capital as a government instrument

Social capital, as defined by Putnam (1996), involves "features of social life – networks, norms and trust – that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives" (Putnam, 1996: 56). More specifically, social capital is embodied in particular forms of inter-personal relationships and networks which may enhance cooperation and reinforce mutual influence among people, such as shared values, common norms, collective interests based upon membership, or emotional bonds, trust, sense of obligation to each other because of kinship, friendships, and shared experience and history, such as neighbours. Social capital is, as in

Coleman's (1988) words, something "inherent in the structure of relations between actors and among actors" (1988: 98). At the core of social capital theory is the idea that, as Field points out, "relationships matter" (2003: 1), or as Putnam puts it, "social networks have value ... social contacts affect the productivity of individuals and groups" (2000: 18-9). Further illustrating Putnam's viewpoint, Field argues that interpersonal relationships and social networks "constitute a resource" (2003: 1), "a valuable asset" (2003: 12), a form of capital, which, as Coleman argues, is productive "like other forms of (physical and human) capital, ... making possible the achievement of certain ends that in its absence would not be possible" (1988: 98). Responding to these arguments, DeFilippis (2001) suggests that social capital has a facilitating role, which will contribute to enhanced productive cooperation, overcoming individuals' selfish pursuits, and revitalising a communitarianism spirit in society, as well as adding to economic development, personal welfare, and public goodness.

In the current literature, the value of social capital for government purposes is examined and discussed. For many, social capital signifies a special resource inherent in civil society, which can be exploited as part of governance processes, working to solve problems that "might otherwise appear as classic market failures or state failures" (Bowles and Gintis, 2002: 422). According to Maloney et al (2000), social capital works to amend state and market failures in the following ways. Firstly, social capital constructs "the context of obligations, expectations and trustworthiness in which actors operate" (Maloney et al, 2000: 802), and under which market transactions and economic behaviour can be efficient. In addition, social capital also signifies information channels among people, which can facilitate cooperation and enhance collective interests. In their study of Japanese fishermen, Bowles and Gintis (2002) note that they share information, techniques and skills about fishing, and this enables the fishermen to work in cooperation and share the risks in the business. Last but not least, social capital signifies the "availability of norms and effective sanctions to discipline relationships" (Maloney et al, 2000: 802). This dimension of social capital is embodied in, foremost, as in Coleman's words, "the interest, even the intrusiveness, of one adult in the activities of someone else's child" (1988: 334), such as "neighbours and kin (acting) to reinforce teachers and parents in dissuading young people from playing truant or skipping their homework" (Field, 2003: 25).

In governance processes, an emphasis on social capital signifies the responsabilisation of community and civil society in conducting self-governance, as well as accentuating the government's rolling-out agenda by exploiting social capital and cultivating community self government abilities. Further illustrating this point, Wakefield and Poland (2005) argue that social capital "provides an avenue for expressing concerns about the need for investment in the social fabric without adopting an overtly redistributionary stance, while at the same time giving neo-liberals a means of expressing their concerns about state intervention in community life" (2005: 2829; see also, Portes and Landholt, 1996; Woolcock, 1998; Labonte, 1999; Poland, 2000; Purdue, 2001). Echoing this point, Labonte argues that "social capital doesn't exist. It is being constructed by our choice of 'things' with which to fill it" (1999: 430); and, when combined with neoliberal ideology, "it is social capital as the shutting down of hard fought for well/fair state entitlements to civil society obligations" (1999: 430).

In many policy areas, such as health and poverty alleviation, the usage of social capital is examined, but less is talked about how social capital is manoeuvred, or deployed, in urban renewal and regeneration. An exception is Purdue's (2001) research, which finds that the "internal communal and external collaborative social capital" held by community leaders, built upon the "mutual trust or goodwill" in relation to "a wide range of community groups ... (and) private and (crucially) the public sectors" (2001: 2221), are key for the "effectiveness of neighbourhood regeneration partnerships" (2001: 2211). Still less is known about whether, and in what ways, social capital can also be manoeuvred, towards governing oppositional voices and resistance, instead of facilitating cooperation, in community regeneration projects. In addition, in the current literature, less has been said about whether, and in what senses, in the Chinese context, social capital could signify a neoliberal government strategy that values community self-government. I will address these knowledge gaps in the remainder of this chapter, by exploring how Qingdao's local state exploits and cultivates social capital in the governance of nail households in No.19.

7.3. Inner city neighbourhood, sense of place and social capital

Social capital, as Fukuyama (2001) comments, is “a by-product of religion, tradition, shared historical experience and other types of cultural norms” (2001: 7). For Dean (2002), social capital signifies “the forms of regulation” that already exist in civil society, which the (liberal) government will seek to obtain and operate through (2002: 39). In No.19, the embedded social ties that reflect many years of developing sociality, people’s shared past, and familial relationships, signify such pre-existing social capital which, later on, is discovered and manoeuvred by Qingdao’s local state for solving the problem of nail households.

As NSRC’s head commented at interview, residents in No.19 have close inter-personal connections and strong emotional bonds, “many families have known each other for three generations and they are close friends that are willing to help each other”. Some of them have kinship relations, they are parents or offspring, siblings, and whose children get married. No.19’s residents share common memories and history. They are colleagues who used to work together in a state-owned factory, the Third Print Works. While the factory went bankrupt in the 1990s, as one elderly male resident pointed out, “we still talk about those old days in the factory, sharing gossip about old colleagues, ...it is enjoyable to have someone to chat with about old memories in your young time” (interview). Another popular topic among local residents is change in the neighbourhood. As one female resident said, “we talked a lot about how fast the neighbourhood has changed, ... we sometimes bemoan those small open markets and groceries that disappeared along with development” (interview). Before market reform, Chinese people called each other comrade, or Tong Zhi, the companions and allies in the building of a communitarian society. While the inter-personal relationships built upon this comradely sensitivity was fading away alongside China’s market reforms, in No.19, it seems that this old comrade relationship signifies an important component of local people’s common past. One male resident recounted this point:

“When we still worked in the factory in those old days, we shared a common belief. ... We just wanted to contribute our young blood and passions to President Mao, the communist party and contribute to the development of the new China. ... People in this community used to be Tong Zhi, ... sharing one dream (of fighting for communitarianism). ...That is a very valuable memory, the new generation will never understand.” (interview)

As many residents point out, chatting with neighbours is an important part of local people's life, and indicates the strength in their connections and sense of belonging to the community. Further illustrating this point, one female resident put it as,

" Myself and my neighbours do not know how to use computers or other high-tech gadgets, we do not use the internet. ... We still keep many older lifestyles that have disappeared from those newly developed communities, such as chatting with neighbours in the courtyard after dinner is still our primary way of entertainment. ... Here everything looks more like a community, a home than other places, where neighbours do not even know each other." (interview)

NSRC is an inherent part of local social networks. Since NSRC was established in 2000, developing friendships and mutual trust relationships with local residents has been the committee's primary agenda. As one ex-staff member of NSRC commented, the committee's previous head, who had been in position from 2000 to 2011, was a highly respected character in the neighbourhood, who was seen by the local residents as a "close friend, ... more like a family member, ... even a life guider, ...caring for local people like parents" (interview). This is because, as this ex-staff member explained at interview, the head "dedicated all her passions in serving the local people", not only helping residents to solve domestic issues such as mediating quarrels between couples, disciplining children, but also assisting people in finding jobs and applying for government benefits. NSRC's current head also claims that developing friendships with local people is important. She recounted this point as, "the first thing I do is to visit many residents' homes, introducing myself to them, let them become familiar with me, winning their trust" (interview). In chapter 5, I outlined the social events that NSRC held in the neighbourhood, such as the "neighbours and friends' festival party". NSRC's current head believes such social occasions help the committee to build connections with local residents, winning their trust and favour, because, as she put it, "(holding these social events) will let residents feel we are doing good things for the neighbourhood" (interview).

The inter-personal networks that NSRC has managed to build with local residents are an essential resource for the committee in conducting its daily work. It is through local residents that the NSRC

gains information, knowing what is going on in the neighbourhood, and extending its purview. Recounting this point, NSRC's head commented that, "residents are the committee's ears and eyes, ... providing first-hand and important information to us" (interview). According to one member of staff from the committee, information provided by residents is especially essential for the committee in undertaking its work relating to, for example "birth control, mobile population, and illegal building construction", because, as he further illustrates, "first hand information from the residents enables the committee to acknowledge things as soon as it happens, and to catch the violator red handed" (interview). In chapter 5, I mentioned some volunteer services organized by NSRC and provided by local residents, such as a neighbourhood patrol team, which comprises approximately twenty local residents, and a charity canteen which enrolled more than twenty residents as volunteers. NSRC staff commonly believe the reason why residents cooperate is because of the friendships that exist between the committee and local people. The head further illustrated this point as, "the committee provide a lot of favours to local people, and they want to give back, ... (this is why) when we ask them to attend the community meetings, they will come, and when we ask them to join the patrol team, they agree to help. ... It is a totally inter-personal network" (interview). Indeed, as Gui (2007) comments, it is based upon a "reciprocity" relationship among RCs and local residents, that volunteer services are developed in Chinese communities (see also, Ikels, 1996; Pan, 2002; Read, 2003; Gui, 2008; Zhu, 2010).

However, some of NSRC's activities seem to breach the trust relationship between NSRC staff and residents. In the previous chapter, I have shown that NSRC was in charge of selecting community representatives for government consultation meetings, but excluded those residents who voiced opposition. This made some local residents feel, as one female pointed out, "(the committee's staff) they want to please the government instead of really caring about people's lives" (interview); or, as another resident put it, "the committee has close relationships with some residents but treat the others as worthless" (interview). Commenting on such viewpoints, NSRC staff point out that they were aware that residents' complain but, as they believe, the closeness between the committee and the local residents remains because their reciprocity relationship, which is fundamental, is intact. Further illustrating this point, NSRC's head put it as, "the committee is still very important in people's lives, and we will continue to offer people our help and do our best to

serve them. ... Frictions (between the committee and the local people) are inevitable, ... but this will not mean when we need residents' help, ... (and) their cooperation, they will say no, ... because they know help is mutual" (interview). This viewpoint responds to Gui's (2007) argument that instead of loyalty to local people, the reciprocity relationship is what makes Chinese RCs influential and efficient in the community. This viewpoint is also consistent with my findings in the previous chapters, that NSRC actually dislocates its accountability from local residents, but, as I will show later in this chapter, it is still powerful in mobilising local residents and drawing their cooperation and help in delivering the government's mission.

7.4. Governing through social capital: rights and duties of self governance citizens

Following Putnam's work, *Bowling Alone*, published in 2000, in which he depicts trustworthiness and civic participation as valuable social capital of a given society that will enhance cooperation, the idea of social capital captured the attention of policy makers. Social capital started to enter in to policy discourses, and was addressed by government officials and policy makers alike, as "a salve to many of the social ills of our time" (Gaynor, 2011: 27). For Kearn (1995), at the heart of social capital lies the idea of responsiblising civil society. Also as Gaynor (2009) comments, social capital signifies a consistent concern of the (liberal) government that is, to govern through shaping an active citizenship which can self-govern, but which is "enveloped in wholesomely positive values such as co-operation, cohesion, caring and neighbourliness, and evoking heart-warming ideals of belonging and solidarity" (2009: 27).

The idea of governing through social capital, for Rose (2000), would signify an etho-politics in modern society. As Rose comments, in modern society, "human beings are now considered to be, at root, ethical creatures", who are guided by "community-based ethics" such as "shame, guilt, responsibility, obligation, trust, honour, and duty" (2000: 1399). For Rose, based upon this conceptualization of people arises a series of new government calculations and techniques that we can call etho-politics, or "a new politics of behaviour" (2000: 1399). At the heart of etho-politics is etho-power that "works through the values, beliefs, and sentiments thought to

underpin the techniques of responsible self-government and the management of one's obligations to others" (Rose, 2000: 1399).

As discussed in chapter 2, in Chinese cities, it is usually through forced eviction and demolition activities that the local state has ended the blocking strategies of nail households and accelerated the land clearance process. However, in Qingdao, at a series of meetings held by Qingdao's municipal government and Shi Bei sub-municipal government, which discussed how to deal with the nail households in No.19, decisions were made, that no forced demolition activities would be used. A primary reason for making this decision was because of the central state's orders forbidding the use of forced demolition. Recounting this point, one official from Shi Bei sub-municipal government pointed out that, "it is a sensitive time to continue using forced demolition because it will mean high political danger to be punished by the central state" (interview). In addition, according to one municipal government official, the reason lies in the fact that forced demolition signifies an instrument of an "inappropriate governance thought". He illustrated this point as,

"Someone might say forced demolition involves using violence and showing people a barbarian government, I agree. But I think we should not deny that under certain circumstances, forced demolition is necessary. For example, when a small number of nail households are slowing down the progress of a development project and, delaying the date the other residents can move back (in the newly developed communities), conducting forced demolition is how government protects the majority of residents' benefits. ... But a primary problem with forced demolition is that government assumes too many responsibilities, ... (meeting these responsibilities) using inappropriate methods, ...it forgets residents' own responsibilities in it." (interview)

Question (author): *"What do you mean by residents' responsibility?"*

Answer (interviewee): *"The community's redevelopment is for the purpose of improving residents' living conditions. If residents want this good thing to happen, they will do something to help the government."*

Question (author): *"What can residents do? Can you give an example?"*

Answer (interviewee): *"Persuading their neighbours to drop other thoughts (on compensation levels and relocation sites), ... solving the nail household problem. Residents are better at this than the government."*

As the above quotations show, this official believes that forced demolition sometimes signifies the "good intention" of government, but its wrongness lies, primarily, in that the government intends to intervene too much. He also claims that residents should assume more responsibility in the regeneration of their community, especially in terms of dealing with nail households. In this official's opinion, residents themselves should be part of the efforts of governing the nail households, because this relates to residents' own welfare, and, perhaps more importantly, as he suggests, residents are better at doing the job than the government. Further illustrating the latter point, the official explained that, "residents are familiar with each other, and they can talk sense into the nail households as friends and old neighbours, ... we have to admit sometimes the residents do not trust government but they will trust their neighbours" (interview). The argument above put forward by this official, signifies a rationality of responsabilising the community in conducting self-governance, as well as a conceptualization that inter-personal relationships are valuable resources for government purposes.

This official's viewpoint is reinforced by many other officials in Qingdao, who claimed, during interviews, that mobilising residents to "persuade the nail households" to drop their resistance activities and vacate their properties, should be the orientation of reforms in Qingdao. When talking about this idea, and trying to evidence its practicality and efficiency, many officials referred to community renewal projects under the planned economy and the work unity system. Before market reform, a resident's panel, which comprised several local residents, played a key role in community redevelopment. The panel would visit each family in the community, inquiring their opinions on whether they welcomed the development, where they wanted to be relocated, and collecting information such as the size of the property, and how many family members were currently living together. This would be considered in deciding how many and what kinds of flats the family would access after redevelopment. In addition, when the majority of residents welcomed the development, and only a few did not, the panel would persuade and educate the latter to change their minds. The involvement of residents' panels in community redevelopment

signifies, as many Qingdao officials believe, a high-level of self governance by residents, and was a characteristic political ethos of, as well as a good government technique under, the socialist planning regime. Putting forward this viewpoint more frankly, one official claimed that it was time to revive a “communitarian spirit in urban regeneration”. He further illustrated this point as,

“Reviving a communitarian spirit is not a bad thing, the spirit that everyone sees themselves as master in the society and responsible for the fate of the community and the future of the country....Many good traditions, good government experiences in the old era (of the planned economy) are lost and forgotten in the era of market reform, such as the massed line, to mobilise the people to govern themselves.” (Interview)

Using residents’ self-governing behaviour in the redevelopment of the community, especially in governing the nail households, and establishing a residents’ panel to do this, is a key idea which underpins reform in Qingdao. In the case of No.19, Qingdao government authorities required NSRC to establish a residents’ self-governance panel, enrolling several local residents, and to lead such a panel in persuading the nail households to accept their compensation offers. In the next section, I will examine how NSRC established, and mobilised a residents’ panel to persuade the nail households. I will also explore residents’ experiences of undertaking “persuasion” and being persuaded, with a focus on the latter.

7.5. The dark side of social capital: nail households, persuasion and oppression

“Sociability cuts both way.” (Portes, 1998: 18)

As Field (2003) argues, “from most of the social capital literature, there shines out a warm glow, social capital’s ‘dark side’, by contrast, remains largely unknown terrain” (2003: 71). What if, as Field notes, the operation of social capital leads to some negative effects that have been neglected by current literature which over-accentuates the optimistic possibilities of social capital? And what if, as Bourdieu (1986) reminds us, using social capital in the governance process reproduces hierarchical power relationships and domination (see also Edwards and Foley, 1997; Wakefield and Poland, 2005)? In this section, I will join these writers’ efforts to explore the dark side of social

capital, by examining whether, and in what ways, in the case of No.19, using residents to persuade nail households, exploits local residents' inter-personal relationships as a valuable (social) capital for government purposes, and leads to the oppression of the nail households.

In exploring the negative effects of the operation of social capital, Field quotes Portes' argument, that "sociability cuts both way" (Portes, 1998: 18; in Field, 2003: 72). Further illustrating this point, Field examines situations where social capital could work in a bad way, such as cooperation among criminals that will harm "victims of organised crime" (2003: 71), and "group identification can also involve stereotyping of outsiders". Explaining the "perverse effects of social capital" in this way, Field (2003: 82) shows us that social connections among people can work against the outsiders, and that, as he puts it, "one possibility is that social capital may form part of a stable system of negative externalities" (Field, 2003: 84). But what if social capital also works against the insiders? In other words, will social capital, or the very friendships, reciprocal relationships and trust cultivated and developed between people, render them under situations that they have to submit to against their own wills? These situations are what No.19's nail households found themselves in when facing their neighbours' persuasion.

As Gui (2007) notes, Chinese RCs' daily work in the community is based upon the help of community activists, a group of local residents who are willing to, and are capable of, offering their help to the committee. According to the head of NSRC, there are nine such activists in No.19, who have been helping the committee with much of its work, such as dispatching birth control brochures to the residents, notifying people to attend community meetings held by the committee, and sharing gossip with NSRC staff, which is an important information source for the committee. As the committee's staff comment, these nine activists are trusted and welcomed by local people. One of them is an elderly woman, who has been offering generous help to neighbours throughout her life, such as taking care of unattended children, taking sick ones to hospital and lending money to families who need it. Another is the factory's old deputy head, who is highly respected by the residents. This is not only because he is the only person in No.19 who has a college education background, "a literate person" as many residents call him, but also, as one male resident commented, "he was a hero of the factory, ... he used to make many wise

decisions and saved the factory from bankruptcy several times, and when he was a big leader he treated us not like subordinates but like brothers" (interview).

For Putnam (1996), social capital can be seen as a resource possessed by people, the amount of which depends on the various kinds of relationships developed with others. Following this viewpoint, the activists in No.19 therefore are people who, in comparison with other residents, possess higher levels of social capital. Helping NSRC seems to be an important way that these activists accumulate their social capital, because, as one activist comments, "helping the committee doing some work lets me become more familiar with my neighbours and the committee's staff, I even get to know many officials from Shi Bei (sub-municipal) government because of the work" (interview). For another female activist, helping the committee is more like an opportunity to collect "debt" from neighbours and NSRC staff. She illustrated this point as, "the (committee's) head always says she owes me a big favour because I have spent much time helping the committee do various kinds of work, without payment. One time, one neighbour asked me to find a job for her son, so I asked a favour from the head and the thing is done. ... The neighbours and the (committee's) head are both very grateful to me" (interview). Indeed, as Bourdieu (1986) points out, social capital is something that will reproduce itself through use.

When NSRC established a residents' panel for the purpose of persuading nail households, it was these nine activists that were enrolled. For some activists, joining the panel was doing NSRC staff a favour, and, perhaps, another good chance for intensifying their connections with NSRC and further accumulating their own social capital. In addition, all of these nine activists felt that the compensation levels and relocation sites were good enough, and, as one male activist pointed out, the reason why he agreed to join the panel and persuade the nail households was because he wanted to do good things for his neighbours. He further illustrated this point as, "I think the compensation levels are really good. Some neighbours do not see it just because they do not really understand the policy. I will help them to understand why accepting the compensation is for their own good. I think this is doing a good thing for my neighbours" (interview). Perhaps it is true as Bowles and Gintis (2002) comment, "the motivations supporting individuals' participation in community governance are not captured by either selfishness or altruism", but, both (2002: 419).

In conducting their persuasion, a typical argument used by the activists is, to “do me a favour”. As mentioned earlier, the activists have offered their help to their neighbours, including the nail households, in their daily lives. For some activists, the nail households should be grateful to them, and the activists believe they can bank on such gratitude when persuading. In illustrating this viewpoint, one female activist’s discourse is typical, “I think if they (the nail households) are really grateful for what I have done in helping them throughout the years, they will listen to my advice, ... sign the contracts, as a way to do me a favour... and pay me back, ... otherwise I will be looked down on by the committee” (interview). When facing the activists argument of “doing me a favour”, some nail households feel it is difficult to challenge. One man from a nail household commented that, “she (a female activist) came to me and said, just sign the contract and see it as doing me a favour. I cannot say no because she once took my wife to hospital and really saved her life, ... so I signed. I think I deserve better compensation, but I have to give up, otherwise I will be a bad person who does not know to be grateful for help.” Therefore reciprocal relationships can work against at least one side of people in this relationship.

Symbolic power, according to Bourdieu and Wacquant (2004), is embodied in a series of postulates, and axioms, that impose themselves as “self-evident, universal” (2004: 273), and are taken by people as such, because they fit with people’s “pre-reflexive assumptions about the world” (2004: 272). Bourdieu and Wacquant also note that political institutions will exert such symbolic power, on people’s conduct, and they call such a way of governing as “hidden persuasion” that works through, “quite simply, by the order of things” (2004: 272). Family signifies one site containing such symbolic power, embodied in the hierarchical order among different family roles, such as parents and children, husband and wife. In Chinese society, a patriarchal culture dominates, and it is usually taken for granted that son/daughter submit to the wills of father/male head of a family. This domination/submission relationship is called as “Xiao” by Chinese people. As Hamilton (1990) notes, in Chinese society, “Xiao” signifies an “eternal principle of the cosmos from which there is no escape between heaven and earth” (Ch’eng Hao, AD 1032-1085, no page; quoted from Hamilton, 1990: 95).

Activists in No.19 not only have close personal relationships with their neighbours, but also build close connections with their neighbours' family members who do not live nearby. One female activist calls herself a friend of an elderly man, a veteran who lived far from No.19, and the father of a male in a nail household in No.19. When planning to persuade this family, who the activist called "very tough and will not easily change their mind", this activist turned to persuade the father and drew on this elderly man's consent to persuade his own son. In the face of the father's persuasion, the male head of the nail household agreed to sign the contract because, as he put it, "I have to respect my father's opinion" (interview). This simple answer, however, is very revealing of a symbolic power that makes the son believe it is natural to submit to his father's will.

Facing the activists' persuasion activities, many nail households felt that their life was seriously disrupted. One female from a nail household illustrated this point as,

" They knock on my door from morning to night, they come inside and want to have a chat with me regardless of whether I am engaged in other things. ... Every dinner my family will be interrupted like more than three times." (interview)

While the activists were engaging in these persuasion activities, NSRC hung out a poster on the outer walls of No.19, which identified the families who had not signed the contract (see **Figure 7.1**). This made the nail households feel guilty and uneasy. Recounting this point, one male said that the poster made him feel "exposed to the public with the purpose of humiliating me, making me feel like a man of sin that is judged by the public." In addition, many residents from nail households pointed out that since the day the poster was published, their neighbours started to stop talking to them and intentionally ignored them. One elderly male indicated the ignorance makes him nervous, depressed, and feeling unsafe:

" Everyone changed their attitudes towards me overnight (after the posters were hung out). ... When I met the neighbours in the (community's) courtyard, they will not say hello to me like the old days, actually, they will not even look at me. ... Making me sad was this old buddy, we have more than thirty years' friendship, but he chooses to ignore me like everyone else, ... gives me that hurting dirty look when we meet. ... I can feel that deep hostility, like ice cold air, it makes me feel unsafe and terrified. ... My response is to lock myself and my family behind the door at dusk, it may sound stupid but I really fear some old neighbours will hurt me." (interview)

Figure 7.1. The poster identifying Fushun community's nail households

**抚顺路19号筒子楼片区危旧房改造项目
住宅房屋征收补偿协议签订进度公示表**

截至2012年9月15日, 抚顺路19号筒子楼片区危旧房改造项目范围内已经有92户居民签订了安置补偿协议, 同意率达到了77.97%。

为已签约户及
协议顺序号

抚顺路19号甲楼

501	503	503	504	505	506	507	508	509	510	511	512	513	514	515	516
88	46	39	77	71		70	60	25	59	51	63		73		
401	402	403	404	405	406	407	408	409	410	411	412	413	414	415	416
4	65	52	41	1	5	24	9		35	61	34	36	57	8	48
301	302	303	304	305	306	307	308	309	310	311	312	313	314	315	316
		55		66	56	84	75	82	85	10	11	82		44	74
201	202	203	204	205	206	207	208	209	210	211	212	213	214	215	216
58	31	47	37	12	17	67	78	20	16	6	3	40	19	79	62
101	102	103	104	105	106	107	108	109	110	111	112	113	114	115	116
		50			80	13		2	49	76	18	89	27	64	33

抚顺路19号乙楼

201	202	203	204	205	206	207	208	209	210	211	212	213
15		68	23	21		91	22			43	69	29
101	101#1	102	103	104	105	106	107	108	109	110	111	112
87	14	26	92	42	28		54	7	83	53		81

抚顺路19号平房

13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
			45	90		86	72	38

Dates: 2012, September

Source: photo taken by the author

Figure 7.2. No.19 Fushun Road is demolished



Dates: 2012, November

Source: photo taken by the author

Activists' persuasion activities, which created various kinds of pressures, including feeling guilty, unsafe, and depressed, as well as obligations to submit to a family member's and a neighbour's will, successfully drove the nail households out of the community. By the end of October, 2012, every resident had moved out of No.19, and the buildings were demolished (see **Figure 7.2**). Another, but just one among many, working class neighbourhood in Qingdao's inner city disappeared, and was deemed to be a necessary contribution to Qingdao's modernization. It is claimed, by Qingdao's government authorities, that the nail household problem in No.19 was solved through persuasion instead of forced demolition, and has avoided the use of violence. But violence, as many writers have noted, can take different forms, such as marginalization and exclusion (see for example, Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977; Sibley, 1995), and includes all situations that render individuals powerless and make them face an oppressor, which is exactly what the nail households in No.19 confronted.

7.6. Conclusion

This chapter examines how NSRC mobilised a group of local residents in conducting processes to change the attitudes and dispositions of the nail households. These persuasion activities signify that in Qingdao cultivating community self governance underpins local reforms. At the heart of this reform initiative is the development and deployment of social capital, in which cultivating trust, reciprocity and obligations between people is a valuable resource for government. In this chapter, I have explored how these dimensions of inter-personal relationships are manoeuvred in the governance process.

NSRC is an embedded part of local social capital, and has built upon friendships and reciprocity relationships with residents. It is exactly because of the reciprocal relationships with local residents that NSRC is capable of drawing on people's cooperation and mobilising them into conducting self-governance activities, such as persuading the nail households. It is through NSRC, that micro level inter-personal relationships and those "individual experiences and everyday activity", are linked to, and contribute to realising, the macro-level governance process (Field, 2003:7).

Another contribution of this chapter is to explore and represent the nail households' experience in urban renewal and regeneration. In No.19, the nail households' experience signifies oppression, defined broadly as all situations of powerlessness. The operation of social capital indeed has a dark side, as this chapter has tried to evidence, in terms of the injustice, marginalization and oppression that have been produced and reproduced.

Chapter 8 Conclusions: Towards an understanding of China's neoliberal urban transition and Chinese governmentality

8.1. Introduction

This thesis has examined the Nan Shan Residents' Committee (NSRC), a community-based, non-government organization, involved in an urban regeneration project in Qingdao in 2012. It has explored a series of governmental agendas and activities that the NSRC has been part of, including facilitating local residents' participation in decision making, and mobilizing residents in particular forms of self governing, primarily as a means to persuade the community's nail households to accept compensation terms and to vacate their dwellings and relocate. Here, the NSRC's priority has been to marginalize oppositional voices and to suppress resistance to the broader regeneration agendas prescribed and implemented top-down by local government authorities. Through this case study, the research has sought to comment not only on the specificity of the Qingdao case, but its relevance to the understanding of recent reform initiatives in China concerning urban renewal and regeneration, and, on a deeper level, the changes of urban governance processes and the emergence of liberal governmentality in China's society.

In the remainder of this chapter, I will discuss how this thesis has addressed the research questions outlined in chapter 3, and how it has contributed to the understanding of community involvement in urban regeneration. In Section 8.2, I discuss the restructuring of state functions and powers in relation to RCs' roles in the urban governance process. Section 8.3 considers the nature of China's neoliberal transition by adopting Foucauldian accounts on governmentality, and I argue that the changes in government rationality, in relation to the government of cities, signifies an important moment, and dimension, of change in Chinese society. In Section 8.4, I examine in what senses the concept, accumulation by dispossession, characterises Chinese residents' experience of urban renewal and regeneration, and I seek to speculate about what we might understand about the possibilities of an alternative urbanism and the propagation of an emancipatory urban politics.

8.2. Residents' committees and the restructuring of urban governance

A primary aim of this research has been to understand the emergence, and rescaling, of governance functions and roles of Chinese RCs, and the diverse ways in which this is re-shaping the nature of governance of urban policy and process. Community building often signifies a flagship political project in liberal societies, where, as Rose (1999) comments, the state seeks to regroup its power through intervening into different spheres of community life. Community development is a primary technology of neoliberal government which, for Mowbray (2010), is characterised by shaping active citizenship and mobilising urban grassroots (self) governance. Lying at the centre of community development projects is what Rose refers to as the, "reframing of the society", in which society is (re)asserted as both the object and subject of neoliberal government(ality) (2000: 1395).

The community building project sponsored by China's central state since 2000 has a central theme, that is, to cultivate urban residential communities' capabilities to tackle a series of social problems arising along with China's market reform, such as joblessness, social fragmentation, and hyper-mobile populations. As indicated in many documents published by China's central state, such as *Advice on Further Promoting the Work of Building Harmonious Community* that was published in 2009, urban communities are imagined as spaces where "multiple interests converged and various social contradictions congregated" (2009, no page), which were to be tackled through building urban management and social cohesion and creating new, much improved, community governance processes. Rose's arguments, that "community has become a new spatialization of government", in terms of how social problems are captured, imagined, and how public policies are legitimised, is pertinent in interpreting community building projects in China's context (1996:327).

For Bray (2006), China's community building adopts an institutional model: the establishment of urban residents' committees as the agencies that will lead community building, mobilising residents' self-governance activities, and drawing synergy and cooperation among government departments and community. For Read (2000), China's RCs are organizations that are functioning

in the vacuum left by the shrinking welfare state. This research has found different aspects in NSRC's agendas and functions that echo aspects of Read's argument. The committee is captured by current agendas in the process of state decentralization, taking over welfare services, local security, birth control, sanitary services and many other functions that are squeezed out of a slimmed down central state. In addition, the NSRC has been in the vanguard of social mobilization and organising volunteer services, such as establishing a community patrol team and a charity canteen that are seen by Qingdao's local state as good initiatives of community self-governance.

Chinese RCs operate within clearly demarcated geographical boundaries, or the residential compounds that are marked out by streets and alleys. While many writers note that China's residential communities and compounds signify basic government units, Bray's (2008) argument, that RCs' neighbourhoods are spaces of power where the state is watching, and disciplining, individuals' behaviours and community life, is more pertinent to the findings of this research. As the NSRC's case has shown, the committee plays omnipresent, parental, and pastoral roles at the grassroots level, intervening into people's private lives, such as mediating domestic quarrels, and regulating individuals' moral and political life – cultivating volunteerism in the community and encouraging people to participate in the decision-making process. A prominent character of RCs, as this research suggests, is policing various kind of urban deviance: the criminals, jobless, disabled, and urban grassroots protests and resistance, such as those against displacement and dislocation.

For Bray (2006, 2008), RCs' neighbourhood signifies new spatial arrangements in the Chinese post-reform society that has replaced work unit spaces. A series of urban dynamics underpin this spatial restructuring process. The first one is private reform and the emergence of property-led development, which have been restructuring Chinese urban spaces with residential housing estates, usually in gated forms. In addition, it is through residential compounds that an increasingly mobile population is anchored, and China's fragmented society is given a manageable dimension by the state; social and economic fragmentation, as asserted by the state, can be governed in smaller geographical spaces. Indeed, urban socio-spatial transformation of this kind, from work-unit led to residential compound based ones, signifies an important dimension of

Chinese society's restructuring after market reform.

There is the issue of accountability and how such arrangements work, and commentators observe a preponderance of community organizations with dislocated accountability for their actions, and the lack of bottom-up engagement in the broader urban agenda and politics (see Mowbray, 2010; Popple, 2008). For Mowbray, community development requires "a critique of the impact of neoliberalism" (2010: 133; see also, Popple, 2008; Mayer and Rankin, 2002), especially in terms of how local community development borrows corporate management ideas and techniques, and how community building adopts de-politicalised and instrumentalised forms that, as Mowbray indicates, while being 'represented as inclusive and empowering community engagement is effectively about containment and control' (2010: 132). These debates about community development are also relevant to the Chinese RCs and community governance in China's context.

Localism and centralised control are also at the centre of current debates on community (self) governance. According to Clark and Newman (1997), along with a process of the dispersal of many government functions to NGOs and volunteer organizations, the state is simultaneously strengthening its capabilities of coordination and surveillance. It is through a series of government techniques, such as competitive funding and performance evaluations, that the state is capable of implementing top-down agendas to community organizations. These arguments also hold true, but partly, to China's context. As NSRC's case has shown, the committee is, on the one hand, operating under a competitive funding regime and system of performance evaluation, and governed under "regulated autonomy". Here, the work of the RCs' staff are subject to modes of self discipline, to meet evaluation criteria and measures of good performance at work (Clark and Newman, 1997); on the other hand, the RC is required to attend government meetings to receive orders, and study governmental documents to learn about government directions. During No.19's development, such managerial and bureaucratic measures were evident and reflective of top-down agendas seeking to shape the committee's behaviour, particularly in defining their priorities, which were policing residents' oppositional voices, and getting them to vacate dwellings identified for 'regeneration'.

My contention is that Chinese RCs play an insignificant, if not negative, role, in facilitating a bottom-up process. The committees are relatively powerless, politically and economically, in controlling resources, personnel, and therefore their own agendas. Representing local residents' voices is usually marginalised by RCs, as a secondary agenda to that of following central government's orders and meeting government's evaluation criteria. This is also the case in relation to No.19's redevelopment project. Delivering up local residents' voices was a secondary consideration by the NSRC, and there was often an agenda of 'flattening' debates, and seeking to generate consensus by manufacturing residents' support and consent for public policies. The State's controls remain powerful, effectively reshaping community agendas and pacifying urban grassroots protests. Because of their top-down agendas, the nature of Chinese RC's are contested in the current literature, and there are those who argue that instead of conceiving of them as urban grassroots organizations, they are more akin to quasi-governmental organizations and the "base-level' administrative institutions" (Read, 2000: 806).

The way of working for such quasi forms, in the Qingdao context, was often by cultivating social capital as a means to create a context for regeneration objectives, of government, to be met. Social capital, referring to the trust, friendships, and mutual help relationships among people, is assumed by planners and policy makers alike as a valuable resource of government. It is assumed that community organizations are good at cultivating and mobilising social capital in governance. Social capital, as Labonte (1999) indicates, signifies a newly conceived government idea that underpins community development project, feeding the later with theoretical supports and practical instruments. The research found out that reciprocal relationships among RCs and local residents, one aspect of social capital, was a power source of RCs in conducting grassroots mobilization. Cultivating and tapping trust, friendship, and mutual help with residents are Chinese RCs' fundamental strategies of governance (Gui, 2008; Zhu, 2010).

As evidenced in the NSRC's case, the committee offers help, develops friendships, and wins trust from local residents, and, drawing on these inter-personal relationships, seeks to cultivate residents' cooperation and help with the committee's daily work often by participating in many volunteer services to cater for the elderly, and community security. In conceptualising how to

solve the 'problem' of the nail households' in No.19, it is these inter-personal connections that Qingdao's government authorities have been seeking to utilise. The NSRC is required to mobilise one group of local residents, so called community activists, to persuade, discipline, and change the minds of the nail households to end their blocking actions. These observations in Qingdao speak to arguments which, casting a broader vision, highlight that social capital and active citizenship are conceptual instruments of urban policy makers in restructuring urban governance processes towards more participatory forms (Kearns, 1995; Gaynor, 2009).

8.3. Understanding China's neoliberal transition

Shaping RC's vanguard roles in urban governance processes reflects, but not only, the restructuring of economic, social and spatial orders in Chinese society, but also transformations at a deeper level, that is, the changes in the rationality and mentality of government. This research has shown that the changes on all of these aspects are relevant to understanding China's neoliberal transition. Neoliberalism is criticized as a blunt theoretical idea, which can be applied to interpret a wide range of economic-political behaviours and therefore can be criticised as an omnipotent and omnipresent concept (see Larner, 2000). Debates arise on whether the concept can be moved from neoliberal centres, such as the UK and the USA, to interpret economic and social changes in other contexts, such as China. For instance, Nonini (2008) argues that neo-liberalization does not characterise Chinese society because of the relentless resistance and protests, which undermine the capacity of neoliberalism to be a dominant economic and political hegemony.

Indeed, as Larner (2000) argues, in using neoliberalism as a concept, we need to further breakdown and clarify the meaning of the term. Neoliberalism is often used with different interpretations and meanings. It can signify privatization and de-regulation as a policy framework; it may refer to political ideology and hegemony as used by Nonini; or, it can embody an emerging art of government and rationality. The latter seeks to interpret neoliberalism through Foucauldian accounts on governmentality. A neoliberal transition can signify the emergence of new forms of

calculations and rules in governing the individuals and the population. While more efforts are invested in these “Foucauldian analyses” of neoliberal governmentality, knowledge is still underdeveloped, especially in terms of understanding China’s transition.

One interpretation is that China’s community development, characterized by RCs’ vanguard roles in community governance, signifies, as in Nicholas Rose’s (1999) words, autonomising and responsabilising the community, or a particular rendition of neo-liberalism that seeks to operate through ‘government at a distance’. This can be illustrated from my work in a number of ways. Foremost, I have demonstrated that in Qingdao’s urban policy, an omnipotent state rationality, claiming to know all and intending to intervene in every domain of social life, has been dissolved. The local state, instead, seeks to play an enabling role. The evidence is the cultivation of, through the implementation of performance evaluation system and the introduction of competitive mechanism, local RCs’ effectiveness in community governance and in tackling many social problems including joblessness, mobile populations, and community security.

Qingdao’s local state is also enthusiastic in shaping NSRC’s expertise in community governance, through endless training sessions, government-led seminars and conferences. The NSRC’s staff are professionals who know about local residents’ dispositions, their past, family situations, and they have experience and wisdom on how to communicate with residents and mobilise residents’ activism and cooperation in the governance process; all of these staff ‘virtues’ are identified, cultivated, and utilised by the local state. Here, the expertise of professionals, such as that vested in the NSRC staff in community governance, is, as Rose suggests, “a new formula for the exercise of rule” of liberal government in shaping the governability of individuals and the society (1993:283). Quoting from Bray, community development and governance in Qingdao show that the “community has become a resource for enabling, facilitating and implementing efficient and cost-effective government” (2006: 533).

A new (active) citizenship is emerging at the centre of local governance processes. While Chinese citizens, from the 1980s to the early 2000s, were part of a nationwide political culture of closed participation and bottom-up process, as Qingdao’s case has shown, now China’s citizens are

required to participate in urban policy, and are assumed as responsible to conduct self-government – such as participate in various kind of volunteer services to take care of the elderly, the disabled, the community's security, and to solve the "nail households problem". The latter, as this research has shown, is combined with government discourses claiming it is residents' own responsibility to participate in policy delivery and make sure the community regeneration process is not blocked by the people who protest. Indeed, as Hindess (2001) reminds us, the claim of respecting individuals' freedom is a central value and strategy of (neo) liberal government.

Indeed, under closer investigations, the freedom, that seems to emerge in China's society, appears to be, what Rose (1999) describes as, the 'artefact freedom'. It is through RCs that individuals are submitted to closer surveillance and disciplinary power. As the NSRC's case has shown, the committee watches, and intervenes into, people's daily lives, consistently remodelling individuals to be what is expected by the state: the active citizens with a volunteer spirit, and, especially, responsible individuals who will act on themselves and others. Further illustrating the latter point, this research has shown how a group of residents in No.19, the so called community activists, are mobilised, by making it their responsible to act, to persuade the community's nail households to conform and to accept the government's regeneration agenda.

To govern in the name of freedom, the liberal government conceives a civic domain outside of itself (Dean, 2002), and seeks to regroup the state's surveillance and policing upon the forms of regulations already existing in civil society (Rose, 1999). Further illustrating this point, this research has presented how the RCs mobilise social capital – the trust, friendship, and reciprocal relationships among people in the community, in governing the nail households. No.19's nail households no longer faced forced demolition and violence but, instead were confronted by peer pressures from neighbours, and signifying the state's ability to regroup its disciplinary power. The individuals in the research witnessed no less, but only different forms of, governance. Many aspects of community life, which used to be outside of the purview of the state, such as inter-personal connections, are increasingly part of the state's remit, through the RCs' emerging roles in the community governance process.

The research also tells the story of how No.19's nail households, facing neighbours' persuasive techniques, were made to feel shame and guilt because they held different voices and opinions. These experiences, while not including physical violence, as signified by forced demolition activities, speak to the more complex and deeply embedded violence that relates to oppression, domination, exclusion, powerlessness and naturalised social and cultural norms which are part of rendering one's submission (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977). Indeed, as Hindess indicates, "unfreedom" is always an inherent part of liberal government (ality). The liberal government claims, and legitimises, its use of police power, or in Dean's (2002) term, an authoritarian approach, based upon categorising and labelling the population. There are always certain social groups, such as the poor, jobless, and, relevant to this research, the nail households or the people who challenge the social and political order, that are recognised, and labelled, by the government, as people who "deserve" the "treatment of unfreedom".

8.4. From residents' experiences to an emancipatory urban politics

The emergence of China's centralized planning system in the 1950s has been radically transformed by the country's insertion into the globalised economy. China's embracing of global financial capital is one of the primary determinants in reshaping its urban spaces at a rapid pace. Indeed, as Harvey (2008) points out, China is now one of the epicentres of a global capital accumulation process that is realized through urbanization. Deeply intertwined into this "global" process, Chinese urbanism shows many characteristics that are similar to those in the other parts of the world. At the forefront of China's neoliberal urbanism is what Harvey terms "creative destruction", "the creation of a neoliberal system" based upon the destruction of prior economic regimes, policy frameworks, and social relations (2007:23); and accumulation by dispossession, an accumulation process that is "funded on the exploitation of the many by the few" (Harvey, 1976: 314). This research has presented many aspects showing these two processes are inter-related, mutual-constitutive, and are parts of the broad cloth of China's urbanization.

To start with, the ethos of China's urban policies has shifted from socialist urban policies

embracing “the institutions and narratives that promoted more egalitarian distributive measures” (Harvey, 2007:22), to urban agendas prioritising rapid development and modernization. Responding to this point, Zhang (2006) argues that a sense of lateness, through which the state articulates urgency for accelerating urban development and modernization, signifies a primary strategy of development in many Chinese cities. Pursuing urban modernity, or a fear of being late, facilitates a particular kind of socio-spatial restructuring process in Chinese society – large-scale demolition and the displacement of the poor to urban marginal areas. Alternative urban agendas, under this flagship of modernization, are marginalised. In Qingdao, the inner-city remodelling plans, which started in the early 1990s, have been legitimised by government discourses of modernization and pursuing urban modernity. Such discourses were proposed and supported by the city’s planners and officials.

Urbanization has the capacity to produce and exacerbate social/political/spatial fragmentations and injustice around Chinese cities. Since the late 1980s, China’s rapid urban development has created gated communities standing alongside shanty towns. Spatial fragmentation, as Merrifield (2011) comments, is a feature of the urbanization process because of the inherent logic of capital accumulation. Capital’s endless search for cultivating profits out of land deals leads to a “‘portfolio’ of property speculation”–(over) investment in some places and disinvestment in other, less profitable, locations; or, quoting from Merrifield, capital is searching for exchange value of urban land leading to the creation of “the two worlds—centre and periphery...side-by-side everywhere, cordoned off from one other, everywhere” (2011:474). In Qingdao, for instance, thirty years of property-led urban development has led to acute social and spatial differentiation. On the one hand, the profitable coastal areas witnessed abundant investment and rapid development to showcase the city’s achievement in modernization. The inner city communities, such as No.19 in Qingdao, on the other hand, have been, until recently, by-passed by capital because of the expected low investment returns there.

Notably, what has happened in China’s urbanization is that people’s political rights have become spatialised, closely related to people’s rights to access urban central locations. In other words, accessing property citizenship is increasingly understood by many Chinese people as staying in

urban central locations that provide high quality education, healthcare and public transport. Since the late 1990s, through ambitious urban planning and inner city redevelopment schemes that were sponsored by China's local state, urban central locations have been gentrified to become privileged places for the rich. High property prices have been a primary market leverage working to exclude the disadvantaged to marginalised places. No.19's development in 2012 embodies this gentrification process. The local residents were dislocated to less developed places while on the site of the community, an official building was planned which was part of the plan to develop a new urban CBD and regenerate the inner city.

Chinese localities' planning and governance processes have been reinvented to assist the capital accumulation process. For instance, in Qingdao, since the early 1990s, local planners started to see their priority as to plan profitable development projects that could attract investment. In 2012, Qingdao's local planners celebrated the planning of No.19's development as a big achievement because the planning is creatively making the community's development to be highly attractive for investment. Crucial to this planning, however, were these initiatives: injecting public funds, displacing the residents to marginalised places, and cutting down compensation levels. Here, China's local state, eager to invest and willing to absorb risks, but less concerned about social needs and distance from socialist egalitarian spirits, was embracing an entrepreneurial transition.

In Qingdao, efforts have been made to generate good governance initiatives in tackling urban grassroots resistance against demolition and displacement, and to facilitate the capital accumulation process. Key to these initiatives is using local RCs' vanguard roles in community governance, and to police and pacify residents' oppositional voices in the community's development projects. The strategy, as this research has found out, works very well, but signifies the deprivation of people's political rights to articulate their voices. In No.19's development, the NSRC reinvented participation as a process of rubber-stamping government's decisions and implementing government's controls. To do this the NSRC identified the oppositional voices as irrelevant and sponsored moral attacks on them – by calling residents who held different voices as 'selfish people'. China's urban development and rapid capital accumulation therefore were built upon an increasingly undemocratic and fractious grassroots politics.

Arguments about power, spatiality and (in) justice, promoted by writers such as Lefebvre (1989) and Merrifield (2011), and based upon the observations of European cities' policies, seem pertinent to the changing nature of China's urbanization. The emergence of spatially unjust cities, and accumulation by dispossession, has been at the forefront of recent critiques from urban researchers (See for example, McCann, 2002; Purcell, 2002; Robinson, 2002; Harvey, 2003; Simone, 2005; Mayer, 2009; Weinstein and Ren, 2009; Attoh, 2011). The discussions focus on what kind of urban planning, participation process, and urban grassroots movements should be developed in order to redefine urbanization agendas, to restructure urban spatiality, and to challenge a police order which, as Dikeç (2001, 2002) comments, produces urban otherness and urban problems to be tackled in urban policies (Castells, 1983; Ellin, 1999; Perrons and Skyers, 2003; Maginn, 2007; Taylor, 2007; Holston, 2009). These writers can be allied under the flag of emancipatory urban politics – people who are seeking to challenge urban domination and surveillance by promoting alternative urban visions. Indeed, as Lees comments, an important task of urban studies is to offer “a stronger normative and utopian dimension to complement its (urban research's) tradition of diagnostic critique” (2004: 4).

Marxists have spearheaded the arguments of emancipatory urban politics. Following Lefebvre's (1991) arguments on the right to the city, or empowering urban dwellers and claiming citizenship, Harvey further illustrates that the right to the city is a right to change the city “after our heart's desire” (2003:939). Enacting this right, urban residents ought to have control over the use of surplus and to fight against neoliberal urbanism and the accumulation by dispossession process. A prominent mission is, as Harvey suggests, fighting against the police order of neoliberal regimes – the common-sense values, narratives and practices of a market economy. As he suggests, “to live under capitalism is to accept or submit to that bundle of rights necessary for endless capital accumulation”, (Harvey, 2003: 940). The rights to private property have become inalienable under a market economy because, as Harvey comments, “our society is dominated by the accumulation of capital through market exchange” (2003: 940). Other rights, such as democratic participation, are, when compared to property rights, seriously marginalised. Indeed, the ordering of rights and social process are mutually constructive, and to challenge the police order of neoliberalism

requires one to redefine social and political rights, in a way suggested by Harvey (2007), that is, moving the currently marginalised rights, such as rights to participate, into the centre ground.

In China's context, the privatization of urban housing in the 1980s facilitated property-led urbanization. Private ownership of housing became an important dimension of China's economic and political life. The privatization of housing opened up and accelerated accumulation by dispossession, by opening up "new fields for capital accumulation in domains formerly regarded off-limits to the calculus of profitability" (Harvey, 2007:35). It also led to the emergence of urban property rights activism in Chinese cities (Hsing, 2009; Shin, 2013) - the property owners who fight against graffiti, illegal renters and demolition to protect (the exchange value of) their private properties.

Over the last three decades, China's central and local state have been working to forge a hegemonic regime on private property rights, by articulating the interests of a wide range of social groups in the privatization and urbanization process. The rich are said to be gaining a fortune from the uprising of property values, the working-class from newly acquired ownership over housing, and the urban poor from increased numbers of public owned affordable housing constructed by using surplus value. The property rights regime is consolidated in Chinese society, and proof comes from the fact that urban grassroots protests have been placated, in part, by higher compensation values and better relocation housing, and consequentially being absorbed into exchange value processes. Other, more political agendas, such as claiming democratic controls over urban development, and requiring community development responding to social needs such as better job opportunities, are seriously marginalised, if not extinguished. The emancipatory power of Chinese urban grassroots protests are further impaired, by the fact that these protests take individualised forms instead of shaping coalitions, seeking immediate goals of economic benefits instead of critiquing of broader urban processes of accumulation by dispossession. Dismantling the hegemonic and dominated position of property rights seems to be the key to developing an emancipatory urban politics in China's context.

There are many ways to do this, but a promising one is to shape the vanguard roles of community

organizations in leading grassroots protests. Ideally, the grassroots organizations need to develop social capital among local residents and local government, so that they can forge coalitions among people and effectively deliver up local voices to government bureaucracies; and these organizations should comprise staff who are elites, with a good educational background and power, so that these people can spearhead urban social activities. Residents' committees, as this research has shown, have the potential of doing all of these things. But, given the fact that Chinese RCs are still underpinned and shaped by strict government controls, there is still a long way to go for them to wrest democratic power and be part of the vanguard of a grassroots resistance that may enable challenges to neoliberal urbanism.

Appendices

Appendix 1. List of Interviews

Government authorities	
Department	Date
General office of municipal government	10 September 2012
Urban planning bureaucracy	18 September 2012
Urban planning bureaucracy	14 April 2013
Urban planning bureaucracy	01 March 2012
Urban land resources	13 September 2012
Urban land resources	02 March 2013
Urban housing management	06 April 2013
Urban housing management	09 April 2013
Si Bei sub-municipal government	19 September 2012
Si Bei sub-municipal government	08 October 2012
Si Bei sub-municipal government	25 March 2012
Fuxin street office	04 September 2012
Fuxin street office	26 November 2012
Fuxin street office	09 December 2012
NSRC	
Positions	Date
NSRC's head	05 September 2012, 09 October 2012
NSRC's deputy head	23 September 2012
NSRC's deputy head	09 December 2012
NSRC's staff	12 November 2012
NSRC's staff	24 December 2012
NSRC' staff	27 October 2012
NSRC's staff	19 November 2012
NSRC's staff	04 December 2012

NSRC's ex-staff	20 March 2013	
No.19 Fushun Road residents		
pseudonym	Date	
Resident X1	06 September 2012	
Resident L1	15 September 2012	
Resident P	25 September 2012	
Resident M1	01 October 2012	
Resident X2	02 October 2012	
Resident X3	30 September 2012	
Resident Y	10 October 2012	
Resident L2	08 September 2012	
Resident W	20 September 2012	
Resident B	14 September 2012	
Resident H1	17 September 2012	
Resident L3	22 September 2012	
Resident M2	20 October 2012	
Resident C	28 October 2012	
Resident D	02 November 2012	
Resident H2	11 September 2012	
Private companies		
Name of company	Position	Date
Yi Zhong Real Estate	Senior manager	05 December 2012
Qingdao Jiankeyuan	Senior manager	22 December 2012
Shi Bei Development Company	Director	17 November 2012
Xiatai Real Estate Evaluation	Senior manager	09 April 2013
Hengyuande Real Estate Evaluation	Manager	28 April 2013
Total number of interviews = 44		

Appendix 2. Interviews with Qingdao Governmental Officials

Background information

1. What are the responsibilities and priorities of your department?
2. How many years have you been working in the department?
3. Can you briefly outline what your job is about?

Urban redevelopment, residents' welfare and economic development

4. What do you understand by the term urban regeneration?
5. In particular, do you think urban regeneration can be equated with the terms demolition and relocation?
6. Can you recall when Qingdao entered a phase of large scale demolition and relocation?
7. In the past twenty years, Qingdao's inner city shanty towns and old neighborhoods have been demolished and remodelled, do you think these projects have contributed to the city's economic development? And to residents' welfare? In what ways?
8. In your opinion, what should be the priority of the community renewal projects? Residents' welfare or economic development? Why?

Forced demolition and policy reform

9. In your opinion, what is the primary source of social conflicts in urban renewal and regeneration?
10. Do you think offering residents higher compensation and keeping them in urban central locations will mediate these social conflicts? Why?
11. Some people would say that nail households are people who protest for their legal rights, do you agree? Why?
12. How would you comment on the government's forced demolition activities?
13. Do you think forced demolition activities violate residents' legal rights? In what ways?
14. Someone might say forced demolition activities are necessary for urban development, do you agree? Why?
15. Are you aware of the central state's reform initiatives on forbidding the use of forced demolition activities? How would you comment on these reform initiatives?

16. What changes have taken place in Qingdao's community redevelopment process, following the central state's reform initiatives?
17. How would you comment on these changes in Qingdao? In particular, do you think they will work towards protecting residents' benefits? And alleviating social conflicts?

Residents Committee

18. How important do you think RCs are in urban governance? Why?
19. How would you comment on RCs relationships with government authorities?
20. What are the standards and processes in appointing heads and assistant heads for local RCs?
And the enrollment of other staff for RCs?
21. Can you tell me about the sources, and amount, of Qingdao RCs' funding?
22. How would you define the nature of RCs? (NGO?)
23. Someone might say RCs are more like a government department at the community level, because government controls their funding source and personnel arrangements. Do you agree, why?
24. Do you think RCs should be more independent from government? Why?
25. Where do you think RCs are accountable? Government or local residents? Why do you think so?
26. Do you think RCs should be involved in urban renewal and regeneration? Why? And in what ways?
27. Will RCs' involvement make changes to the way in which community redevelopment is conducted in Qingdao? In what ways?
28. In particular, will RCs' involvement mean the improvement of residents' benefits?

Residents' participation

29. Do you agree with the opinion that community redevelopment should draw upon residents' participation? Why? And in what ways?
30. In particular, do you think residents' participation will enhance residents' welfare, in what ways?
31. And will participation mediate social conflicts?

Appendix 3. Interviews with NSRC staff

Background information

1. Can you briefly introduce the background of NSRC?(Year of establishment, number of staff, etc.)
2. How many years have you been working in the committee?
3. What does your job entail?
4. What are NSRC's primary roles and responsibilities?
5. How efficient would you say that NSRC is at its work?

NSRC's relationships with government authorities

6. How important do you think RCs are in urban governance? Why?
7. In the past decade, the local government authorities have passed down many tasks to RCs. Do you feel this is right?
8. How do you see RCs' relationships with government authorities?
9. What are the standards and processes in appointing heads and assistant heads for local RCs?
And the enrolment of other staff for RCs?
10. Can you tell me about the sources, and amount, of Qingdao RCs' funding?
11. How do you define the nature of RCs? (NGO?)
12. Someone might say RCs are more like a government department at the community level, because government controls their funding source and personnel arrangements. Do you agree, why?
13. Do you think RCs should be more independent from government? Why?
14. Where do you think RCs are accountable? Government or local residents? Why do you think so?

NSRC's relationships with local residents

15. How close would you describe the committee's relationships with local residents?
16. Which initiatives have the committee sponsored, that you would say have contributed to enhance local residents' welfare?
17. Among local residents, who are the people that have close relationships with NSRC?

18. How have these people helped NSRC with its work?

Community redevelopment and residents' participation

19. Do you think RCs should be involved in urban renewal and regeneration? Why?

20. Will RCs' involvement make changes to the ways in which community redevelopment is conducted in Qingdao? In what ways?

21. In particular, will RCs' involvement mean the improvement of residents' benefits?

22. In 2012, No.19 was enlisted in the city's old development plan. Do you think this community redevelopment will enhance local residents' welfare? Why?

23. Are you aware that in the past decade, local people have submitted several petition letters to the municipal government, demanding the (re)development of the community? Was the committee part of this?

24. No.19's residents can choose which real-estate evaluation companies they want to use. Do you feel this is a good initiative? Why?

25. No.19's residents are consulted on their opinions on compensation levels and relocation sites, do you feel this is a good initiative? Why?

Nail households and forced demolition

26. Some people would say that nail households are people who protest for their legal rights, do you agree? Why?

27. How would you comment on government forced demolition activities?

28. Do you think forced demolition activities violate residents' legal rights? In what ways?

29. Someone might say forced demolition activities are necessary for urban development, do you agree? Why?

30. Are you aware of the central state's reform initiatives on forbidding the use of forced demolition activities? How would you comment on these reform initiatives?

Appendix 4. Interviews with No.19 Fushun Road residents

Background information

1. Can you tell me a little about yourself?
2. How many years have you been living in No.19?
3. Can you briefly outline the history of No.19?

The neighbourhood

4. How has the neighbourhood changed in the past two decades?
5. Do you like the changes and development of the neighbourhood? Why?
6. Are you familiar with other residents in No.19? How close are you with them?
7. Will residents in No.19 help each other in daily life? Can you give me an example?
8. In the past two decades, some of your old neighbours have moved to other communities, why are you still living in No.19?
9. Do you still have contacts with those who have moved out? How often? And through what approach?

Relationships with NSRC

10. Do you know NSRC staff? Are you familiar with them?
11. How frequently do you visit the committee? For what reasons?
12. Are you aware of any social events, community meetings, and services such as a charity canteen, provided by NSRC?
13. Have you been part of these? Why/why not?
14. In your opinion, among the neighbours, who are the people that have close relationships with NSRC?
15. Why do you think so?
16. Do you feel the committee cares about local people? Why do you think so?

Community's redevelopment and residents' participation

17. In 2012, No.19 was enlisted in the city's old city development plan. Is this what you expected? Why?

18. Are you aware that in the past decade, local people have submitted several petition letters to the municipal government, demanding the (re)development of the community? Are you part of this?
19. No.19's residents can choose which real-estate evaluation companies they want to use. Do you feel this is a good initiative? Why?
20. No.19's residents are consulted on their opinions on compensation levels and relocation sites, do you feel this is a good initiative? Why?
21. Are you consenting to the compensation level and relocation sites that are offered to you? Why?
22. If not, what will you do about it?

Nail households and forced demolition

23. Some people would say that nail households are people who protest for their legal rights, do you agree? Why?
24. How would you comment on the government's forced demolition activities?
25. Do you think forced demolition activities violate residents' legal rights? In what ways?
26. Someone might say forced demolition activities are necessary for urban development, do you agree? Why?
27. Are you aware of the central state's reform initiatives on forbidding the use of forced demolition activities? How would you comment on these reform initiatives?

Appendix 5. Interviews with private companies in Qingdao

A. Interview with developer Yi Zhong Real Estate (the developer of No.19 Fushun Road)

Background information

1. Can you give me some basic information about your company?
2. Can you tell me about some of your company's development projects in recent years?
3. Please briefly outline what your job entails?

Investment plan in No.19 Fushun Road

4. Why did you decide to invest in No.19?
5. Have you been involved in the planning process concerning the community's (re)development?
In what ways?
6. Do you think planning an office building on the site is a good plan? Why do you think so?
7. How much do you think is the appropriate compensation level for residents?
8. Does your company have a say in the decision on the compensation levels and relocation sites for No.19's residents? If yes, how does this happen?

Relationships with government authorities

9. How would you describe your company's relationships with Qingdao government authorities?
10. In what ways, and through which approaches, has your company tried to build connections with the different government departments?
11. Will you be given a chance to influence the government's decision-making process? How exactly?

Opinions on forced demolition

12. How would you comment on forced demolition activities?
13. Some people would say that nail households are people who protest for their legal rights, do you agree? Why?
14. Do you think forced demolition activities violate residents' legal rights? In what ways?
15. Someone might say forced demolition activities are necessary for urban development, do you agree? Why?

16. Are you aware of the central state's reform initiatives on forbidding the use of forced demolition activities? How would you comment on these reform initiatives?
17. In your opinion, have these reform initiatives led to changes in the way the land clearance process is conducted in Qingdao? In what ways?

B. Interviews with real-estate evaluation companies

Background information

1. Can you give me some basic information about your company?
2. Please briefly outline what your job entails?
3. Can you tell me a little about the business of real-estate evaluation?

Real-estate evaluation

4. What are the standard procedures involved in evaluating real-estate?
5. Which are the standards used in evaluating real-estate? (market price or government's guidance?)

Relationships with government authorities

6. How would you describe your company's relationships with Qingdao government authorities?
7. In what ways, and through which approaches, has your company tried to build connections with the different government departments?

Appendix 6. Information sheet for participants



REC Reference Number: (GSSHM)/11/12-24

YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS INFORMATION SHEET

Post-Political Change and Urban Renewal in Qingdao, Shandong Province, China

We would like to invite you to participate in this postgraduate research project. You should only participate if you want to; choosing not to take part will not disadvantage you in any way. Before you decide whether you want to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what your participation will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

Urban demolition and residents' relocation have long been the focuses of public policy and are relevant to citizens' welfare. This research project aims to study residents' experiences during demolition and relocation, reflecting their feelings, concerns and various actions when facing relocation.

By participating in this research you will help me understand the procedure of the urban redevelopment project: the changes of concerns over redevelopment policy, how is the policy decided and implemented, as well as the effects of urban demolition on residents' daily lives.

If you agree to take part in the project, you will be interviewed for approximately 120 minutes. Interviews will be recorded, and data will be stored subject to your consent. Access to the recordings and data will only be limited to myself and my supervisor, and all the recordings will be deleted as soon as the final report has been completed. The use of interview data will be anonymous in the writing report. Your personal information and interview data will not be connectable.

It is up to you to decide whether to take part or not. If you decide to participate, you will be given a copy of this information sheet and you will be asked to sign a consent form which you will be given to keep. If you agree to take part you will be asked whether you are happy to be contacted about participation in future studies. Your participation in this study will not be affected should you choose not to be re-contacted. You have the right to withdraw without giving a reason at any time until November 30, 2013, as the final reports will be completed then. A decision to withdraw at any time, or a decision not to take part, will not affect the standard of care you receive. A final report will be given to you based on your request.

My Contact details are:

Name: Qing Huang
Email: qing.huang817@kcl.ac.uk
Address: Department of Geography,
King's College London,
Strand, London, WC2R 2LS

If this study has harmed you in any way you can contact King's College London using the details below for further advice and information: Prof. Rob Imrie, Department of Geography, King's College London, Strand Fourth Floor, London, WC2R 2LS, UK. Email: rob.imrie@kcl.ac.uk

Telephone: +44 (0)207848 2487

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH STUDIES

Please complete this form after you have read the Information Sheet and/or listened to an explanation about the research.



Title of Study: Posts-political change and urban renewal in Qingdao, Shandong Province, China

King's College Research Ethics Committee Ref: (GSSHM)/11/12-24

Thank you for considering taking part in this research. The person organising the research must explain the project to you before you agree to take part. If you have any questions arising from the Information Sheet or explanation already given to you, please ask the researcher before you decide whether to join in. You will be given a copy of this Consent Form to keep and refer to at any time.

- I consent to my interview being recorded.
- The use of interview data will be anonymous in the writing report. Your personal information and interview data will not be connectable.
- I understand that if I decide at any time during the research that I no longer wish to participate in this project, I can notify the researchers involved and withdraw from it immediately without giving any reason. Furthermore, I understand that I will be able to withdraw my data up to the point of November 30, 2013.
- I consent to the processing of my personal information for the purposes explained to me. I understand that such information will be handled in accordance with the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998.
- Optional: I agree to be contacted by the researcher to participate in a follow up interview for this project. (If interested, please check the adjacent box and provide your contact details.

Email: _____

Tel: _____

Participant's Statement:

I _____

agree that the research project named above has been explained to me to my satisfaction and I

agree to take part in the study. I have read both the notes written above and the Information Sheet about the project, and understand what the research study involves.

Signed

Date

Appendix 7. Research Ethics Approval



Qing Huang,

Department of Geography

Dear Qing,

REP(GSSHM)/11/12-24 'Posts-political change and urban renewal in Qingdao, Shandong Province, China.'

I am pleased to inform you that the above application has been reviewed by the GSSHM Research Ethics Panel that FULL APPROVAL is now granted.

Please ensure that you follow all relevant guidance as laid out in the King's College London Guidelines on Good Practice in Academic Research (<http://www.kcl.ac.uk/college/policyzone/index.php?id=247>).

For your information ethical approval is granted until 27/06/14. If you need approval beyond this point you will need to apply for an extension to approval at least two weeks prior to this explaining why the extension is needed, (please note however that a full re-application will not be necessary unless the protocol has changed). You should also note that if your approval is for one year, you will not be sent a reminder when it is due to lapse.

Ethical approval is required to cover the duration of the research study, up to the conclusion of the research. The conclusion of the research is defined as the final date or event detailed in the study description section of your approved application form (usually the end of data collection when all work with human participants will have been completed), not the completion of data analysis or publication of the results. For projects that only involve the further analysis of pre-existing data,

approval must cover any period during which the researcher will be accessing or evaluating individual sensitive and/or un-anonymised records. Note that after the point at which ethical approval for your study is no longer required due to the study being complete (as per the above definitions), you will still need to ensure all research data/records management and storage procedures agreed to as part of your application are adhered to and carried out accordingly.

If you do not start the project within three months of this letter please contact the Research Ethics Office.

Should you wish to make a modification to the project or request an extension to approval you will need approval for this and should follow the guidance relating to modifying approved applications:

<http://www.kcl.ac.uk/innovation/research/support/ethics/applications/modifications.aspx>

The circumstances where modification requests are required include the addition/removal of participant groups, additions/removal/changes to research methods, asking for additional data from participants, extensions to the ethical approval period. Any proposed modifications should only be carried out once full approval for the modification request has been granted.

Any unforeseen ethical problems arising during the course of the project should be reported to the approving committee/panel. In the event of an untoward event or an adverse reaction a full report must be made to the Chair of the approving committee/review panel within one week of the incident.

Please would you also note that we may, for the purposes of audit, contact you from time to time to ascertain the status of your research.

If you have any query about any aspect of this ethical approval, please contact your panel/committee administrator in the first instance

(<http://www.kcl.ac.uk/innovation/research/support/ethics/contact.aspx>).

We wish you every success with this work.

Yours sincerely

Daniel Butcher

Research Ethics Officer

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